

# Lifecycle of guide dogs and forming interspecies networks

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<p>Tutkielmassa käydään läpi opaskoiran elinkaaren eri vaiheet. Tutkielmassa tarkastellaan, miten koiranpennuista tulee opaskoira, opaskoira työssä ja mitä opaskoiran työ tarjoaa ihmisille. Tutkielmassa samalla mietitään sitä, miten opaskoira nähdään eri vaiheissa koiran elämää eli nähdäänkö opaskoira perheenjäsenenä, yhteistyökumppanina vai apuvälineenä. Tutkielma esittelee etnografisen materiaalin lisäksi yleisesti koiran ja opaskoiran historiaa ja ihmis-eläin- antropologian teorioita kuten ajatuksia villieläimistä, domestikaatiosta ja siitä, miten koirasta tulee lemmikki. Tarkemmin tarkastellaan ajatuksia luottamuksesta ja alistamisesta sekä sosiaalisen sopimuksen ajatuksesta ihmisen ja eläimen välillä. Tärkeimmiksi ajatuksiksi nousivat yhdessä oleminen, yhdeksi tuleminen ja sukulaisuusteoriasta käsite yhteinen oleminen sekä vaihtoteoriasta ajatus erottamattomasta omaisuudesta. Tutkielma tarkastelee myös, kuinka lajien, ihmisen ja koiran, väliset verkostot muodostuvat ja miten niitä ylläpidetään.</p> <p>Opaskoira tutkimus sijoittuu Suomeen ja pääkaupunkiseudulle. Työ perustuu etnografiseen aineistoon, joka on kerätty tekemällä haastatteluja opaskoira- ja työkoira-aiheen ympäriltä ja osallistuvalla havainnoinnilla Opaskoirakoululla, pentutreneissa ja kouluttajien työpäiviä seuraamalla. Ajallisesti tutkielma sijoittuu keväälle 2017. Haastattelut ovat semi-strukturoituja, ja niitä on yhteensä 12 kappaletta. Lisäksi on haastateltu ja seurattu yhtä huume- ja asekoiran kouluttajan koirien harjoittelukertaa. Lisämateriaalina on käytetty Opaskoira-vuosijulkaisuja kymmenen vuoden ajalta ja muuta opaskoira-aiheeseen liittyvää kirjallisuutta internetistä ja koiralehdistä.</p> <p>Tutkimusaineiston perusteella on huomattu, että opaskoirilla on elämänsä aikana monta eri perhettä ja ihmistä osana koiran elämää. Opaskoira ei ole lemmikki aktiivisen pentuvaiheen, koulutuksen ja työuransa aikana, vaan saa lemmikki statuksen vasta eläkkeelle jäädessään. Opaskoira nähdään usein perheenjäsenenä ja elämänkumppanina. Lisäksi opaskoira on apuväline, mutta tämä ei korostu niin, että koira olisi objekti, vaan koira on aktiivinen toimija. Opaskoira ei voi nähdä yhdessä roolissa, vaan koira on näitä kaikkia läpi opaskoiran elämän: perheenjäsen, kumppani ja apuväline. Opaskoira antaa käyttäjälle paljon enemmän kuin vain pelkän liikkuvuuden. Opaskoira toimii seurana ja on sosiaalinen tekijä, joka mahdollistaa liikkumisen milloin tahansa opaskoiran käyttäjä haluaa liikkua. Opaskoira luo sosiaalisia suhteita eri ihmisten välille johtuen opaskoiran eri elämänvaiheista ja koulutuksen luonteesta. Opaskoiran on huomattu poistavan näkövammaisuuden stigmaa ja tekee opaskoiran käyttäjästä helpommin lähestyttävän, mikäli opaskoiran käyttöä verrataan näkövammaisen valkoisen kepin käyttöön. Koirien työtä ei voitu tässä tutkielmassa selkeästi määritellä, koska eri ihmiset kokivat työn määrittelyn eri tavalla.</p> <p>Tutkimuksesta selviää, että vaikka opaskoira on objekti eli apuväline, tämä ei ole välttämättä negatiivinen ongelma. Itse asiassa apuvälineenä opaskoiran on mahdollista olla osa elämän kaikkia eri vaiheita. Selvää on, että kukaan ei puhu opaskoirista pelkästään objektina, esineenä, vaan ne ovat eläviä olentoja, jotka tekevät työtä oppaana ja ovat kumppanina läpi elämän.</p>			
Avainsanat – Nyckelord – Keywords			
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<b>Tiivistelmä – Referat – Abstract</b> <p>This thesis examines the guide dog topic by looking into different phases of the guide dog in its lifecycle, phases such as how the dog puppies become guide dogs, how guide dogs work and what the guide dog's work offers. This thesis also questions how the guide dog is seen in different phases of its lifecycle: is it seen as a part of the family, as a family member, a work partner or as an aid tool. This thesis has ethnographic fieldwork material but also general history of the dog, guide dogs, and human-animal anthropology theories from wild animals to domestication and the dog becoming a pet. Theories that are used include the ideas of trust and domination, the idea of a social contract between humans and animals. Crucial ideas that are used are 'becoming with', 'being with' and from kinship the 'mutuality of being' and from exchange theory the idea of 'inalienable possessions'. This thesis will look into how interspecies networks are formed between the guide dog and the people participating in its life.</p> <p>The ethnographic research and fieldwork are based in Finland, the capital area of Helsinki and the surrounding cities of Vantaa and Espoo. The ethnographic material has been collected with interviews and participant observation in the Guide Dog School and puppy training classes during Spring 2017. Interviews are semi-structured and in total 12 interviews were done. The participant observation was done in the Guide Dog School, including the puppy training classes and observing the trainers' workdays with the trained dogs. Additional material was gathered in the penitentiary setting where a drug and gun dog trainer practiced finding different substances with his working dog. Other material has been gathered from "Opaskoira" (Guide Dog) yearly publications and from other animal and dog magazines and internet sources.</p> <p>The gathered ethnographic material in this thesis indicates that guide dogs are a part of many families during their lives and get to know many different people. The guide dogs are not identified as a pet during the puppy period, training period or working period. Only at retirement can a guide dog be treated and identified as a pet. The guide dogs are seen as a family member and as a companion. In addition to the previously mentioned roles the guide dogs are also an aid tool, but they are not treated as an object; instead guide dogs have a more active role than a mere object might have. A guide dog is not seen as having only one role, instead these different roles blend together making the guide to have these all roles. The guide dog, through its work, gives out much more than just the ability to move to its user, the guide dog is a companion through life and is a builder of social relationships between different people. Interspecies networks are formed and built due to the nature of the training of the guide dog and its work and its lifecycle. A positive side-effect of the guide dog is that it removes or lessens the stigma of being vision impaired compared to using only the white stick. Defining the dog's work is difficult as different people defined and experienced the meaning of work differently.</p> <p>The guide dog being an object is not a negative issue as being seen as an object, an aid tool, allows the dog to participate in every aspect of life of the vision impaired person. It is very clear that no one speaks about the guide dogs as if they are cold objects, instead they are warm, living animals that work as guides and are companions through life. Most importantly, guide dogs are trained and worked with in a way that suits the ideas of active engagement, being and becoming with.</p>			
<b>Avainsanat – Nyckelord – Keywords</b> Anthropology, guide dogs, working dogs, animal's work, a dog being a tool, pets, kinship, Finland			

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# 1. Introduction

I have had a long-time interest in human-animal relationships relating to; dependencies, co-habitation, hunting, symbiotic relationships and in the 'power' struggle in the relationship of humans and animals. I did my Bachelor's thesis on bear hunting in Finland (in the University of Roehampton, London) and at first, I was supposed to continue my on the same subject area for my Master's thesis. Later my interests changed course due to owning a dog myself however I still wanted to stay within the area of human-animal domain. With the help of my first thesis supervisor, Eeva Berglund, the idea of the thesis moved more towards the dog-themed area, into hunting dogs where the theme still continued to evolve into a more specific idea of service dogs and working dogs. My original idea was to study and do fieldwork with different types of service dogs; drug, gun, money dogs, aid dogs, insulin (hypo) dogs, hunting dogs etc. and compare the different types of works and relationships involved in with these different working dogs and humans. I was able to get in contact with the Guide Dog School (official school that trains guide dogs in Vantaa). During the first interview I understood that the guide dog is a very vast topic, and not even my Master's thesis could cover it all, it could cover only fragment of it. There have not been that many Master's theses on human-animal subjects in the University of Helsinki in recent years. I felt that I would be able to contribute something, maybe more understanding to the importance of the dog and its work and something to the area of human-animal relations, to the co-operation between humans and animals, in this case dogs and to the shared lives of these different beings. (especially as dogs are important companion animals and work animals in the human world). Guide dogs especially pertain a certain role in the human world, working as guides for vision impaired humans but also as companions through everyday life.

I found that in University of Helsinki Kankaanpää-Kukkonen (2018) constructed a Master's thesis on the rescue dog subject, using kinship and humanitarianism theories. From University of Oulu one Master's thesis was looking into cat's status in the society through frame analysis (Maimanen 2019) and then closest to my thesis topic area is Ahto-Hakonen's (2016) Master's thesis looking into the relationship and terminology between a police officer and their working police dog. Ahto-Hakonen's thesis dealt with the subject of the police dog being also at the same time a working tool (or a police force tool), and how the relationship between the dog and the police officer was built and what the dog meant for the police officer. Ahto-Hakonen came to the conclusion that a police dog is a tool in the police work but it cannot be seen purely as a tool. There are co-dependencies and an intertwined relationship and fine balance between the work of the police officer and their police dog. For example, the police officer needs to give instructions to the dog but the police officer needs to bear in mind the limits of guiding the dog too much, as this might cause failure in the dog's work, but also guiding too little is not ideal either (2016: 80). Something similar can be found in my thesis as a guide dog cannot be seen only as a tool, it is much more. Human and the guide dog both trust and depend on each other.

After my introduction to the Guide Dog School and understanding that the guide dog subject alone was enough, I chose to interview different people relating to the guide dog subject area. I soon realised that I almost covered the entire lifecycle of the guide dog and this ended up being the structure of my Master's thesis, as I will present different life phases of the guide dog and present relevant theories that I have connected to the overall theme. The title of this thesis explains what this thesis covers. It covers different lifecycles of guide dogs but it also includes the idea of interspecies networks. Especially, I chose the word *forming* interspecies networks. Then for a second, I changed the title into *building* interspecies networks and *making* was one idea as well. Then again *building* and *making* refer to something man-made, something that is moulded into shape, or controlled by the maker. Instead, *forming* refers to some sort of an agreement. Forming relationships, is mutual, as both parties are involved in the forming of a relationship. Forming might indicate something about trust. In this thesis, I will use Tim Ingold's theories of trust and domination (2000; more about this in chapter 2.2). The human and the guide dog relationship is more about forming than making or building. A dog is trained of course, taught certain commands and behaviours but a guide dog needs to want to work, to form a working relationship with the human. Without this, the guide dog's intentionality, there is no guide dog. There is only a dog, which is more suitable to be a pet or have some other work function of which the dog is more interested in. Critical theories that are used in my thesis are Tim Ingold's idea of 'being with' (2000: 76), an active engagement with the human and the animal. Donna Haraway's idea of 'becoming with' (2008: 23) is very suitable when I describe the training and the working part of the guide dog's life. When thinking about the bonds and the relationships that form between the guide dog and different people that participate in its life, most suitable theories for this is Marshall Sahlins' idea of 'mutuality of being' (2011a: 2) from kinship theories and Annette Weiner's idea of 'inalienable possessions' (1992: 2).

Guide dogs have an interesting role when cohabiting with humans. They are not pets but instead working dogs, helping humans and human lives with their work. Puppies are raised as potential working dogs, specialising in guiding humans. What makes these puppies different from normal pets is that these are raised by and for other people. The puppy will not stay in the home where it spends its first years. Instead this dog, guide dog, will move during its lifetime at least three times or even more, becoming the new family's member. Every time going to a new home, becoming new family's member. When a guide dog finishes training and is estimated to be fit to continue to its working life, as a guide dog, this dog is then matched to its future user, a vision impaired person that has applied for a guide dog. When a guide dog's working life begins, the guide dog and its user (a vision impaired person) need to adjust to working and being together. While the guide dog is working it is seen as an aid tool, by the party who pays for it, the hospital or the insurance company. This is what the guide dog is on the paper as well, an aid tool for a vision impaired person, as a wheelchair is an aid tool for paralysed person. In the guide dog's working life, the dog has another role as well: it is a family member. There is this duality within the guide dog, it is an aid tool but also a family member, but the one thing that the guide dog is not in its working life, is a pet. A guide dog transforms into a pet when it retires. A guide dog is

not anymore, a guide dog, it is a former guide dog, retired, it is still a family member but with also it has gained the status of being a pet. A peculiar thing about the guide dog is that it is a family member of many different families, it is a part of many people's lives. A guide dog is a family member when it is a puppy, a member of the care family (a care family is that raises and trains the dog through its puppy period), where it grows into adulthood. After the dog has passed the tests and can begin the training to become a guide dog, this dog lives in kennels but on weekends and holidays it still spends time with its care family. During training guide dog learns to know certain trainers better, but their relationship is that of a co-worker, the dog in this relationship is not seen as member of the family<sup>1</sup>. When the guide dog is working as a guide, it is a family member to its user and their possible family. When the guide dog retires it often gains a new family. Usually someone close to the user or even the original care family takes the dog for its retirement. Thus, this guide dog can be a part of two or three families minimum. I will describe the guide dog as a family member as I found out in my interviews and during my observations. Only one user mentioned that the guide dog was more an aid tool for the user, but for the user's children, dog was a family member. Similarly, trainers saw the guide dog more as co-worker, or an aid tool than family member as the dog lived in the kennel. The guide dog in these situations or phases of its life forms different interspecies networks but also helps to create intraspecies networks as well. With intraspecies networks I mean human-human networks, where a specific guide dog has connected different humans and these relationships continue even though the specific guide dog is not anymore present.

In my thesis, I will approach the subject of how others see vision impaired persons with a guide dog and then without a guide dog, using a white stick. Both are well known symbols for being vision impaired, the white stick being older symbol and the use of guide dogs is nowadays very well known. During my research, I read and heard that there are differences on how these different "tools" are seen. Erving Goffman's frame analysis (1986) is very suitable with this idea as Goffman's frame analysis answers to individuals and their experiences of social life and how it is structured (p.13). In my thesis I have interviewed and studied individuals who perform and act also in a group (in case of puppy training classes) and individuals who act together, in this case a human individual and an animal individual. I, also as a researcher, experience life from my individual perspective and build frames from my experiences. Goffman's theory does not answer to the organisation of society nor to the structure of social life (ibid). Frame analysis might also explain why people might approach more often a vision impaired person while being with the guide dog instead when they would be using the white stick. People have certain frames or connections to dogs, for them a dog is often seen as friendly and kind. As the common guide dog breeds in Finland are the Labrador Retrievers and Golden Retriever, these dogs themselves through their reputation make them approachable. There is also something special about human

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<sup>1</sup> Although during spring 2020, while finishing this thesis, I noted that there was a post on the Guide Dog School Facebook page about how the trainers had taken those dogs that were in training phase (those dogs would live normally in the kennel during the week) to their home to be part of their family and pets during this special time of self-isolation due to coronavirus (COVID-19).

and animal co-work whereas the white stick is purely an inanimate object. A vision impaired person using the white stick becomes almost invisible and something that normally people would perhaps avoid. A vision impaired person with a dog is more approachable to people, there is something to talk about, easier to start a conversation. This is not an equal conversation, as the guide dog is often the focus of the conversation, leaving the person behind the dog, making them invisible. This might not be a negative issue as some conversation or human contact with other might be better than no contact at all. In Halme's text in the Guide dog 2018 publication she mentions that she feels like an equal student because of her guide dog as she can move with her guide dog in the university setting without any human assistance/guide. She described that she has become part of the community more, as with the guide dog people approach her and start talking about the dog and from that it is easy to continue (Halme 2018: 62). It is interesting that both the white stick and the guide dog are aid tools but both are very different and the impact of using one is very different to the user.

Working dogs work as a working pair or a team with humans. The focus of this thesis is to look into the life of a guide dog, its life cycle. I will also use other working dogs as a small comparison in this thesis but the main fieldwork and research is done regarding guide dogs; raising future guide dogs, their training and then their working life with some focus on what happens after working life. In Finland, guide dogs are free to their users because guide dogs are regarded as aid tools, such as wheelchairs or other type of aids, and aid tools are provided by central hospitals. Receiving guide dogs is fair as it is regulated and supported by the government and covered with tax money, i.e. there are no private organisations nor charities that provide guide dogs. In other countries this is completely different as guide dog users most often receive their dogs as a donation or some organisations donate to guide dog schools in order to help them train guide dogs. Also, in other countries guide dog users own the guide dog and they need to take care of the vet bills and the guide dog by themselves or with help from donations. I have read some cases where the guide dog is taken in to the family as a puppy already and raised to be a guide in the family for a vision impaired family member. Similar to what the police/customs and other governmental working dog's raisers and future working partners do. Other working dogs, such as police dogs, customs dogs, and corrections dogs, are owned by the government in Finland. The difference between a police dog and a guide dog is that the police dog works with the dog trainer, a police officer, its work partner, whereas guide dogs work with civilians, vision impaired persons. I became interested in the role of the working dog, is it only a working tool or is the dog also seen as a family member or even a pet? What are benefits of the working dog and is it possible to replace the dog's work with a human or with something else?



## 1.1 Structure of the thesis and research questions

I started my fieldwork with these main research questions:

- Do all dogs work and what type of work do these dogs do?
- What is the value and benefit of the guide dog's work and can humans replace guide dog's work?
- How is the dog perceived, as a family member, co-worker, a tool for work or aid tool?

My initial thought was to discover, if animals do work, as the concept of work might not be same for animals as it is for humans but as my ethnographic research advanced, I realised that more important questions were:

- What is the value of the working dog for its users? I.e. what does the working dog give to a human with its efforts and help?

In this introduction chapter I will introduce my thesis subject, methods and data and also discuss the limitations of this study and some ethical issues that might exist. In the second chapter I will introduce general theories of human and animal anthropologies with focus on the domestication ideas and hunting and I will briefly discuss about personhood. At the end of second chapter, I will explain dog's history with humans and more specific history until today on the Finnish guide dog. This is the foundation for my thesis. Then I will continue to answer my thesis title "Lifecycle of guide dogs and forming interspecies networks". In chapters three to five, I will answer to the first of part of the title "lifecycle of guide dogs" by splitting the guide dog's lifecycle into different phases. Chapters three and four are based on my fieldwork and interviews and are more ethnographic. Chapter three is the beginning of the guide dog's lifecycle; puppyhood and training in the puppy classes and the life in the care families. I will discuss the status of the guide dog puppy whether the status of the guide dog puppy is a family member or something else. I will see how the bonds are formed between the puppy and the care family even though the dog is borrowed from the Guide Dog School. In chapter four, I will focus more on the training for the profession of being a guide and the working life of the guide dog. I will look more into the status of the dog: is it only an aid tool or is it also a family member pertaining some sort of duality or permeability? I will also discuss the impact the guide has for the people around this topic. The final phase of the guide dog's lifecycle is presented in chapter five, containing the guide dog's

retirement and afterlife. In this chapter, I will also focus more on the theme of the interspecies network, the connections that the guide dog has made and connected through its life and connections that live on after the dog. These connections are more like a web that connect different people during the life of the dog and even after. The connections are more than a straightforward narrow line of relationships, intraspecies networks. In this chapter I will answer to the remainder of the title “forming interspecies networks”. I will introduce some theories of kinship and reciprocation, gift giving and connect these to my ethnographic material that I have introduced in the previous chapters and combine them with the ways how interspecies networks are formed. Sixth chapter is the conclusion chapter where I will bring these themes and findings together and answer to the questions that I started with. Lastly, I have acknowledgments, bibliography section, figures and attachment describing the fieldwork material that I have collected in more detail.

## 1.2 Methods and data

I did most of my active fieldwork in March and April 2017 although I started with preparations to enter the field already in January 2017. My first interview was conducted in February 2017. I have continued to be on the field so to speak until this moment as I have observed and listened to different conversations relating to dogs, guide dogs and followed different news and social media relating to the guide dog topic. My physical field was in Finland, in the capital city of Helsinki and in the surrounding cities of Vantaa and Espoo. I did 12 semi-structured interviews with different people relating to the guide dog topic<sup>2</sup>. People that I interviewed are involved in the working dog and guide dog subject area. I did five interviews with the care families, families that raise puppies, puppies that might grow into future guide dogs. I interviewed two professional senior guide dog trainers in the same interview session. These trainers specialise in training guide dogs and helping working guide dogs and their users. I was lucky enough to observe two working days with two different senior guide dog trainers and different dogs that they were training. I did have conversations throughout the day with these two different senior trainers and I did take notes but our conversations were not recorded and thus not calculated to the interview total count. One recorded interview was done with a dog trainer who specialises in training and using dogs in his work in a penitentiary setting. He uses working dogs that search for drugs and guns. After this interview I was able to observe a training session with his dogs searching for drug substances. I did this interview with the trainer before I narrowed my thesis to mainly focus on the guide dogs. I wanted to keep the prison dog example here in my thesis as a small comparison, as the dog trainer had interesting remarks regarding duality on how dogs are seen. I was able to have access to interview two guide dog users and with one of the guide dog users I was able to observe walking with the guide dog in the busy Helsinki city centre. I did further interviews with the staff of the Guide Dog School, one with the head of the Kennel,

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<sup>2</sup> More detailed list of fieldwork material, see attachment.

one with a trainer who was organising the puppy classes and also one interview with a person who is in charge of the puppies, care families and other office work in the Guide Dog School.

The interviews were selected based on availability and access. Before finalising my research topic, I had a broader subject area of working dogs in general. I approached different organisations, government officials, aid dog organisations via email in order to get access to working dogs and people working with and training those dogs. I was not very successful in my contacts as I received some responses but these did not lead to any interviews nor any opportunities to do participant-observation. I was able to gain access to the Guide Dog School and through this access I was able to start my participant-observation and get contacts for the interviews. My interviews were semi-structured as I had a list of questions that I asked in my interviews but these questions varied a little bit depending on who I was interviewing (i.e. the puppy's care family, a guide dog user or a dog trainer). I did not ask questions in any specific order and questions were more of a starting point to the conversation and within the conversation more questions were raised and those new questions were asked within the conversation (deep hanging out as Clifford Geertz has explained this<sup>3</sup>). I began by asking if all the dogs had jobs or worked so to speak or whether the dogs were separated into such categories as official working dogs (such as governmental dogs that are used by the police, customs, penitentiary etc.), service dogs (guide dogs, assistance dogs, hypo dogs, therapy dogs, hunting dogs) and family dogs (such as pets). This categorisation came up in one of the interviews (more in chapter 4.3). I also asked about the person's dog history and how they see the dog (as a family member, worker etc.). I was also interested in the dog's work and its value. My other questions related to sociality factor that the dogs brought and what else the dogs bring to the human's life.

I used an audio recorder for my interviews. I always asked for a permission to record the interview stating that the interview by itself is not published anywhere, that the recording serves only as a notetaking tool and that I might quote something and use it in my thesis. I did not have any formal assent forms. During the interviews, I also occasionally took some notes, more of those were short notes for me or new questions for me to ask that a comment in the interview raised. The shortest interview was 9 minutes while the longest lasted little bit under two hours. Most of my interviews were around one hour or one and half hours long. I also did interviews without the recorder, for example talking with dog trainers while observing their working day or took some notes during my participant-observation in different scenarios.

Participant-observation was mainly done in puppy training sessions during March and April 2017. I also did my interviews and most of the other observations during this time. I had a couple of other participant-observation situations that I did later than March or April but it was still during the spring of 2017. The puppy training locations varied quite a lot, occasionally they were

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<sup>3</sup> Garry Marvin taught this during my Bachelor studies in Anthropology in University of Roehampton, London. See also Geertz, Clifford (1998) 'Deep Hanging out', *The New York Review of Books*, October 22, 1998 Issue

indoors inside the Guide Dog School or other indoor settings such as the Iiris Centre<sup>4</sup> for the vision impaired, other times inside a shopping mall, airport, parking hall, in the forest or somewhere else outside and occasionally on public transport such as a local train or metro, for example. Weather differed quite a lot, occasionally it was raining, very windy or even minus degrees. This all was often quite challenging as notetaking in some conditions was impossible not even mentioning audio recording, that was unthinkable. During my participant-observation I did not record any audio, I reserved recording for only as a helpful tool in the interviews. Many training sessions involved walking or other type of movement and this made it difficult to take notes at the same time. In some sessions I was actually physically a part of the training group by holding leashes, walking puppies, or carrying a treat bucket that held training treats for the puppies. I had similar issues while following two different trainers as they were walking different dogs in training. I was able to attend a couple different house calls that puppy trainers did. I went with the trainer to the care family's home in order to solve some issues that they had with the puppy training, such as jumping towards people when they arrive inside or walking exercises outside their home. Puppy training sessions were usually held twice a week, Tuesday and Thursday afternoons and occasionally there was puppy school during Wednesdays at daytime. Training session lasted one hour and during Thursdays there were two different groups, one starting at 5 p.m. and the other 6.30 p.m. I participated in both of these Thursday groups.

In addition to my field work, I read the Guide Dog annual publication that was published by the Guide Dog Association<sup>5</sup>. The Guide Dog annual publication includes stories and writings by the guide dog users, care families, volunteers and others relating to the guide dog subject area. I was able to get the Guide Dog publications from 2007 until 2018<sup>6</sup>. With these publications I have been able to gather more information on the guide dog's life phases and the people surrounding the guide dog, where in my field this has been lacking, such as the guide dog's retirement as I do not have much of fieldwork material of my own from this phase.

My fieldwork did not only limit to the Guide Dog School, guide dog puppy training sessions or interviews. I was a keen listener if I heard something dog-related on a communal train or a bus for example. I own a dog myself, so I also reflected my findings while walking my dog and discussed dog-related topics with other dog owners in dog parks and found occasionally that I was also a kind of a research subject in the dog-human world. Occasionally I would be approached, well my dog was approached, during our walks and strangers would share their dog related memories to a stranger, to me. I found that with a dog, it was easier to be approached. I occasionally closed my eyes during my walks with my dog and tried to imagine how it would feel if I let my dog guide me. Of course, these moments were quite brief, as my dog is not trained to

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<sup>4</sup> Iiris Centre is located at Itäkeskus. It is place where there is accommodation for longer visits and recreational centre for different sports and other activities for the vision impaired persons. For more information: <https://nkl.fi/en/english/iiris>; accessed 14.4.2020

<sup>5</sup> Publication name in Finnish is 'Opaskoira 20XX' and the year of the publication is in the headline. The Guide Dog Association's name in Finnish is 'Opaskoirayhdistys ry'.

<sup>6</sup> I was able to get 10 of those publications from the Guide Dog School and one year 2018 I was able to borrow from the National library. I did not have access to the year 2009 publication.

guide me, or walk at a certain pace or even a straight line. Instead it is very common that my dog bounces from side to side, sometimes running, sometimes making sudden stops or even reversing the direction thus it was quite dangerous to trust my dog while my eyes were closed. This exercise helped me a lot when I was trying to figure out if there is an ideal guide dog model if any. I will discuss more about the idea of an ideal guide dog in chapter three and four. At least I was able to conclude some good traits that a guide dog would need to have. I found that having a dog myself made it easier to ask some questions during my interviews or through my own dog's behaviour. I was able to ask if working guide dogs had these similar behaviours and so on.

The field of my study is quite small. There are around 200 guide dog users in Finland. These numbers fluctuate little bit: in 1997 there were altogether 198 guide dog users (Herttuainen 1998: 260) and at the beginning of 2018 there were 225 guide dog users (Koljonen 2018: 2). Between the years 1937 until 1997 there have been 692 guide dog users altogether of which 153 were blinded during the war and 539 were vision impaired civil people and of this total number 170 were women and 522 were men (statistics from Herttuainen 1998: 260). At the beginning of guide dog training and usage in Finland one condition to receive a guide was to be blinded from the war thus at first guide dogs were reserved for war veterans. This current number of 200 guide dogs changes occasionally depending on if there are many guide dogs retiring at the same time. For example, puppies from the same litter all completed their training and started to work around the same time thus a lot of new guide dogs are available to their users and at the end, many guide dogs might retire at the same time. I only interviewed two guide dog users. There are also two other guide dog training companies or schools. Suomen Opaskoirakoulu was established in 2007 and is based in Kuopio (Suomen opaskoirakoulu) and the other one NouHau Opaskoirapalvelu is based in Munakka and started in the 2000's (NouHau Opaskoirapalvelut). Both places are quite young establishments as compared to the Guide Dog School, where I did my fieldwork. These two were founded in the 2000's whereas the Guide Dog School was founded in 1947. I did not do any of my fieldwork in these two other places. These two different schools or companies are privately owned whereas the Guide Dog School belongs to under the supervision of the Finnish Federation of the Visually Impaired (FFVI) and is a member of the International Guide Dog Federation (IGDF) (Opaskoirakoulu, a) and these make the Guide Dog School official training school for guide dogs. I find out that the other company/school NouHau Opaskoirapalvelu is also a member of the IGDF but it is not under FFVI.

I handled my research material by going through my fieldwork notes, interview notes that I had written down and other reflective notes that I wrote after my fieldwork. Every recorded interview I have extensively listened and made minute notes. I recapped the discussed themes per minute in the interview thus making it easier to go back to listen certain sentence or conversation. I felt that more extensive or complete recording notes might not be useful and would take more time. With these minute recap notes, I would still understand very well what was discussed and it saved a little bit of time in typing these. After extensively going through my whole material and combining my reading on the Guide Dog annual publishing, I was able to pick out

the strong themes from my research. Most of my research material answered in some ways to my initial questions and some of the data raised new ideas or questions that I will try to answer with the ideas of 'being with' (Ingold 2000) and 'becoming with' (Haraway 2008). I understood as well, that I had too many questions when I entered to the field. In hindsight, I should have been able to narrow down questions to be more specific or look for only one theme. I could have used some sort of word picking as one of the methods for selecting the main material from my research but as mentioned my scope was too vast thus this type of methodology would have ended as a limiting factor for my thesis.

### 1.3 Limitations of this study

There are some limitations to this study and some ethical issues that I need to consider as well. The scope of people that I interviewed is quite small and especially fieldwork with the guide dog users is the smallest part of my field work findings. I did my fieldwork in one Guide Dog School thus my findings do not pertain the complete view of how training and ideas about guide dogs are perceived by other guide dog schools/companies, trainers, care families, guide dog users or other people around this subject. I did not do any research on the governmental side, in the hospital district or in the Finnish Federation of the Visually Impaired (FFVI) thus I do not present any official view on the guide dogs except if found in written materials and sources that I have found. One limitation is also that I am a native doing a study on my native home country and native language Finnish. Being native, might make me consider some situations or sayings as not important or cause me to take some things for granted that seemed obvious to me but might not actually be so. Another possible limitation is that, while my fieldwork was done in Finnish, I am writing this in English, so something might be lost in translation. Considering this, I felt that it is more important that if my thesis can help someone else, even just a little, then it is worth it.

I did not ask any of my interviewees' age as I did not consider this to be relevant, nor did I ask the guide dog users the status of their disability, i.e. whether they were born blind or if their impairment was due to an accident or some degenerative disease, or whether they had a limited or residual ability to see. I did not feel comfortable discussing their personal physical qualities or their illness/disability. By not posing these questions I was able to avoid conflicted ethical issues that arise from the administration of guide dogs by hospitals and from different laws and limitations protecting people and their personal data. Thus, even if I would have asked certain questions, I might have not been able to disclose them here in my thesis. I consider that my reluctance to ask certain questions is also due to being a novice in fieldwork and in participant-observation. If I were to do more interviews on this subject now, I might have a different perspective or I might ask questions that I was too afraid to ask before. I might make different observations now that I am more immersed in this subject due to writing this thesis. There might be a difference on guide dog users and their reaction to guide dogs depending on whether the person was born blind, became

blind at another point in time, or has limited vision or there might not be any difference at all. Age and life experience might be one factor how person handles a guide dog. For example, if the guide dog user has handled dogs before or has had guide dogs before.

I had to sign a non-disclosure agreement with the Guide Dog School, not to reveal any personal details relating to guide dogs and their users, as this is a sensitive matter (when someone's physical qualities, illness or disability is in question). Because of the non-disclosure agreement, I cannot discuss the specifics of guide dog puppy testing as this is classified information, although I was lucky enough to observe one of these testing sessions.

I am dog owner, and this may make some points seem obvious to me, but it means that I can also relate to certain issues of human-animal relations more easily. I found that owning a dog made observing the puppy classes easier. Occasionally, I had a hands-on approach to fieldwork, being more an active participant rather than just an observer. Some problems with puppies were easier understand as I had lived the puppy period with my dog as well, thus I was able to relate to more easily to such issues as poop training or behavioural training.

As the topic of this study is narrow there is a small there is a chance that someone might recognise a subject of my interviews and ethnographic description. This is not my purpose as I have tried to make the care families and the guide dog users anonymous and protect their identity. The exception to this is the Guide Dog School's staff as I have interviewed them while they were working. They appear as professionals in this thesis. Similarly, if I have used material from guide dog magazines and from books where people are interviewed under their own name and made public statements, I will use their correct name when possible. I made the decision to leave out all the dogs' names as then they would be linked either to the care family or to the guide dog user. I have not given any nicknames for the dogs as I accidentally might give a nickname that is in use for a puppy or a guide dog and again might confuse the reader or make false recognition. Note that all dogs were actively called by their names and the care families were called by their puppy's name, e.g. "Spot's care family". The puppies' names were actively used in conversations with the trainer and care families such as: "How is Spot doing? Does Spot still have problems with food?" or in other conversation such as: "Spot is not able to attend to this class", or "Spot is coming to the Thursday class at 5 pm". The trainers used the term 'guide' (opas) when talking about a certain dog, for example 'guide Spot' (opas Spot), thus referring to the dog in human terms. I noticed this later in my material, thus I did not have a chance to ask reason for this while I was in the field. It could be shorter to refer to these dogs as a 'guide' (opas) than as a 'guide dog' (opaskoira). I will use the term 'guide dog' in my thesis.

My status in the field might have been problematic as well. I was introduced as a student doing research for my Master's thesis in one of the puppy training class. Not everyone was present at that training class, so for some my status might have been unclear. I might have been seen as a trainee (the Guide Dog School often had trainees working for them as part of their studies in animal handling), a junior trainer, or something else. I noticed this as sometimes one

of the care families asked me for advice regarding their puppy. I always tried to explain that I was doing research for my Master's thesis there, and provided my topic of interest, i.e. working dogs, guide dogs, aid tool, family member, etc. I also always mentioned that I am not a dog trainer and pointed and named out trainers and told them that they would need to ask these questions from those named trainers.

A limitation of this study is also the short period of the fieldwork. My focus was broad as I tried to consider everything relating to guide dogs in small amount of time. A more focused thesis could be that one puppy litter is followed through their training and testing and also interviews with that litter's different care families through the journey. This approach would require more time from one year and onwards, and would actually be more applicable to doctorate research. Another idea would be to do fieldwork in the period of two-week training course where guide dogs are fresh out of training and guide dogs and their future users get to know each other and start training. Then after training one would follow new guide dogs and their users for certain time period. Later on, while reading more about the guide dog topic, I realised that also interviewing and following volunteers in the guide dog world would be interesting as well. These volunteers do very valuable work helping guide dog users with new routes or helping organise small courses or weekend retreats with different themes, such as a snow walking course. Of course, these topic ideas described above are more of a PhD type of research and material, as in Master's thesis, the subject area should be narrow and the length of the written thesis is shorter. For further research, one could study the breeding of guide dogs, teaching and training guide dogs, or compare the countries where guide dogs are in use (I learned that in Japan, for example, it is preferred that the guide dogs wear clothes, so that they do not make a mess when they go inside or travel in public transportation). Study could also be made from changes in legislation and attitudes towards aid dogs, guide dogs and working dogs. There are multiple different angles that one could choose from.

## 2. Theories of human-animal relations

In this chapter I will briefly describe theories on the human-animal relations, from the point of view of anthropology. I will describe how animals have been regarded in the human culture with the focus on domestication, hunting, and personhood. At the end of this chapter I will discuss the history of dog in human co-habitation and recap the Finnish guide dogs' history until the present day. With this chapter I will build up an answer and background for my first research question: 'Do all dogs work and what type of work do dogs do?' One needs to understand what a dog is in a first place, and specifically how dogs have been a part of the human history. Are dogs just some symbolic objects that are good to think with (borrowing the classic phrase from Lévi-Strauss in Leach 1970: 34 and Tapper 1988: 50), some totemic category used for equivalent categories for human (Lévi-Strauss in Leach 1970: 40) or are dogs active agents by themselves



with humans (borrowing Ingold's ideas of 'being with', 2000: 76, and dwelling, 2005: 501). One also needs to understand the overall concept of dogs co-habiting with humans and being in the human world and humans being in the dog's world. I can start answering my research questions in the further chapters, with this chapter's information.

## 2.1 Human and animal relations in general

When animals are wild and out of control they are usually a problem for humans. Animals that are domesticated might still cause some problems but then most often the problem originates from the human, the owner of the animal. An animal has not been trained properly or has not been kept under control. Then wildlife are in their essence out of control (same idea in Ingold 2000: 62), as there is no human owner who can take the blame for not training the wildlife properly. As animals are wild, they cannot be seen as being able to behave in the human world as they are undomesticated, however wild animals are problematic when they invade the human life or sphere, animals are matter that is out of place. This is based on Mary Douglas' idea of matter out of place, in the example of dirt (2001: 36). For example, when dirt is outside in the ground, it is not matter out of place, it is actually in its proper place. Dirt in our food or in our bed is matter out of place, as it does not exist in its proper place. Douglas gives other examples, for instance, shoes by themselves are not dirty or matter out of place but when they are placed in the middle of the dining table, shoes are matter out of place (2001: 37). This same thought can be applied to animals, especially wild animals that approach human habitation, for example wild wolves or herd of elephants in Africa, they are matter or animals out of place. Of course, as these animals are wild, they pose different threats to the humans rather than just being out of place. There are many real-life situations where wolves have killed pets or hunting dogs near human habitation (Söderlund 2019) or have killed livestock (bears, wolves, lynx and wolverines cause most damage for the livestock in Finland, Metsähallitus 2015). A pet dog that lives inside the human house, when sleeping on its owner's bed or on a couch, is not necessarily seen as matter or animals out of place anymore. A pet dog might be seen as matter out of place when it is running outside without a leash. A dog has become a household product, not wild and not matter out of place while living inside with humans. This can be seen in Edmund Leach's (1964) paper regarding the use of language and taboos. A dog in the English language use has been categorised under tame animals, pets and their location is inside the house, and when compared to a livestock that are living outside the human house (table can be found on page 41). Leach notes that a dog, at least in the English culture and language use is very close to humans and it makes it inedible (ibid: 44). He also continues that, for example for hunting dogs, different names are used. In the English fox hunt, a dog is called "a hound" and then the word "dog" is actually used for the fox that is being hunted (ibid: 52). Leach signifies in this that dogs have a special place in the English language and culture (ibid: 53).

Ingold then provides an interesting view with his idea of dwelling (deeper discussion on the dwelling perspective can be found in Ingold's book 'The Perception of Environment', 2000). In his dwelling idea there is no boundary between nature and culture, thus humans do not dwell only on the culture side and animals only on the nature side. Instead, humans and non-humans dwell in the same world. Regarding dogs, humans and dogs dwell in the same world but also most often under the same roof. This idea of dwelling has also the concept of power within it. (Ingold 2005: 501.) Ingold means with this is that the human history has always been presented as of the history of humans. Ingold questions whether separation between humans and non-humans can exist, as non-humans have helped to shape this human history (ibid). Before, humans have narrated the history of human-animal relations but this could be changed with the idea of 'being with' animals and taking more active engagement, especially on the animal side (Ingold 2000: 76). According to Ingold, both of the humans and the non-humans create the conditions that allow each other's existence through activities (2005: 503). Haraway (2008) uses a variation of this description of the combination of nature and culture. For example, while describing her walk with her dogs in the nature, she looks at the surroundings and thinks how human's touch of building, burning etc. is visible but still there is wildlife present. This wildlife has adapted its life on the human modified ground. She calls this 'naturalcultural contact zones' (ibid: 7). Similar, to Ingold's idea of 'being with', Haraway uses a slightly different term, 'becoming with' (ibid: 23). She describes it with the practices of living together, recognising and respecting other beings that live with us. This is explained well in the example of how the scientist Barbara Smuts studied baboons in Kenya. In order to collect data, she needed to respect and recognise baboons and that they in vice versa recognised her. At first, she tried to blend in with the environment, to become invisible, but this did not work. (ibid: 23-25.) 'Becoming with' entails much more, and I for one cannot do any justice to it, Haraway's words are like an elegant poem that cannot be dissected and analysed. But what I gather from her idea is that 'becoming with' is: being with other, sharing life, action, histories blending and being in the current that becomes multispecies histories. For guide dogs and vision impaired persons this is exactly what Haraway describes. The guide dogs allow different type of existence for the vision impaired persons as they do not need a human guide. The vision impaired person allows the guide dog to exist and work in turn. The guide dog and the vision impaired person are 'being with' together through their mutual work-partnership but also are 'becoming with' through everyday life, shaping that individual history of the guide dog and the human, blending these together and creating multispecies histories and naturalcultural contact zones. Through the guide dog's work and action, the human reciprocates its work by giving care to the dog.

Some describe history as human dominant, Tsing's research (2012) actually indicates that sometimes non-humans advance or force humans to shape their future thus making history. For example, the dry rot fungus (*Serpula lacrymans*) forced the British navy to stop using wooden ships, as their ships were contaminated with the dry rot fungus and it was spreading through their naval units creating havoc. Because of this dry rot fungus, ironclad ships were introduced in the 1860s (ibid: 144-145). This obviously changed the British naval future and made new history with

the influence of non-humans or as mentioned above by Ingold, with active engagement. According to Ingold, the world cannot be divided into different compartments with some compartments containing only society and some only nature. There is no boundary between nature and society (Ingold 2005: 507-508), instead it is more political and has to do with power relationships (ibid: 501). This Ingold's idea of dwelling might also explain why earlier in this chapter I used the idea of matter out of place when thinking of the wildlife. Wildlife in human minds usually belongs to the nature's side of things but as Ingold stated there is no border that can be crossed; instead we all dwell in this same world. A lack of power on the human side when confronting wildlife makes the wildlife feel like matter out of the place. Humans have themselves claimed a certain area as their own habitat, whereas the animals exist as they always have without any border between culture and nature. It is only humans that construct unseen borders between nature and culture. Or as Lévi-Strauss might write that culture is based on nature, or to be more exact, how we imitate on the nature's organisation and impose that to our culture's categories (in Leach 1970: 21).

Rebecca Cassidy writes that dualism is something that resides in the Western thinking, how we experience the world is made into binary oppositions, such as, individual/society, nature/culture etc. Borders between these oppositions are becoming more permeable especially in the human-animal category. One example that she gives in her article is the BSE (Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy) which is in humans that is the variant of Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease, the disease that cows carried and then infected humans. This is an example of something that has forced us to realise a new relationship with the animals and that the border between animals and us, humans, has become permeable. (Cassidy 2001: 194-195.) In Lévi-Strauss' writings there is a domain for nature and a domain for culture but both are needed in order to live. For example, we need food to survive, food is part of nature's domain, but as we are human beings, we are part of the culture domain (in Leach 1970: 34) and food can be transformed into part of the culture's domain. With cooking, food is not anymore in the nature's domain, as it is transformed with culture (ibid: 30). Still, even with cooking, food still sometimes belongs to the nature's domain as some methods of cooking are derived from nature. Sometimes the process of cooking can be cultural but the end process in the nature's side, such as boiling food is a cultural process (as it needs water and something that receives it) but the end result natural (the state of boiled food is similar to the food that is decomposed) (ibid: 31). Lévi-Strauss has also suggested that the idea of animals does not come from social categories, instead these categories are drawn from nature (in Tapper 1988: 50). This makes me think that can dogs or guide dogs specifically be thought this way. For example, a dog is an animal, belonging to the nature's side, but by teaching certain acceptable and wanted behaviours or actions the dog is transformed to the culture's side. Still, a dog cannot be completely residual in the culture's domain, as it still maintains animal traits and behaviours. The dog exists somewhere between nature and culture. In permeable state, as Cassidy uses in the case of an illness originating from the animals, or dwelling, being with humans as Ingold uses the term. Lévi-Strauss tells that humans have both sides; being men, we are part of nature and being humans, we are part of culture (in Leach 1970: 34). Could the dog be

considered to be completely in the side of culture as Ingold cites Taylor's idea of culture; if man has obtained necessary skills, as a member of society, then he has culture (Taylor in Ingold 1988b: 86). Then it could be argued that when a dog has been trained to have the necessary skills, and the dog maintains these, it has acquired culture or can be thought to belong to the culture's side, if we want to make distinctions between nature and culture?

Multi-species ethnography gives a different approach to the old nature/culture discussion as Münster writes: "Multi-species ethnography aims to move beyond humanism and human exceptionalism, by exploring how humans and non-humans co-create their shared worlds and environments." (2016: 429). This idea has been already brought up by Ingold and Haraway, as mentioned above but in different wording and concept names. Münster's article (*ibid*) gives an example on how humans and animals co-create and co-habit the world together, she also uses ideas from Haraway and Ingold, same ideas as mentioned earlier. In her article the focus is on the human-elephant working relationship. In the article elephants are viewed as tools but also as labourers. Similar juxtaposition that I face with the guide dogs. Münster writes that human-nonhuman entanglements exist due to the juxtaposition but these intimacies are created through every day's work together with the humans and the animals (*ibid*: 425). These intimacies contain the tension of mutual violence. This violence is against elephants, in order for them to work correctly and at beginning to tame and train them, these animals that were once wild (*ibid*: 434). Elephants might need to be corrected with physical ways, and of course, elephants' violence against humans also exists (*ibid*: 436), Münster mentions that she was denied access to elephant camps as they were considered to be dangerous and also one experienced elephant handler was killed by a captive elephant (*ibid*:429). Intimacies entail also affection as described in the article how an infant elephant was taken care of by sleeping with it on the mud floor and adjusting the human's own timetable to suit the infant elephant's needs (*ibid*: 431). Münster mentions that these intimacies entail also a larger sphere than a single human-elephant relationship, it includes local issues and even larger issues of the area; politics and economy (*ibid*: 425). In the past these mahouts (people whose occupation is to train and work with elephants) worked on colonial plantations in the forest, for example by helping in the logging work (*ibid*: 431-432). Nowadays the mahouts and elephants help scientists, veterinarians, and official governmental workers to gain access to forests that by normal means, i.e. by car, are inaccessible. Mahouts and elephants also create infrastructure inside the forest by shaping the area with their work (*ibid*: 426). One might still question how voluntary are the elephants in this work relationship. As Münster describes violence is used to coerce elephants to work with humans. This shows that elephants cannot be seen merely as objects without their own agendas or wants. Still, the relationship is not and cannot be on equal terms as long as violence dictates the terms of the relationship.

Recently, studies in anthropology have gone beyond what was previously considered as normal, or they have shifted the focus of research from humans to something else. These studies investigate animals that have previously been disregarded as not as interesting or important as other animals. For example, insects are now included in these new studies and further studies

include smaller microbes and plants and fungi (good review on this can be found in Kirksey & Helmreich 2010). Kirksey & Helmreich's article highlights the importance of the idea on "speaking for and speaking to" (Appadurai's idea in Kirksey & Helmreich *ibid*: 554), we constantly need to re-examine whether anthropology actually captures other places and other voices correctly. Appadurai is concerned how different voices are represented in anthropologists' ethnographies and how this also fits in the spatial location and time (1988: 17). "The problem of voice ("speaking for" and "speaking to") intersects with the problem of place (speaking "from" and speaking "of" (Appadurai 1988: 17, also in Kirksey & Helmreich 2010: 554). Some of these animals, previously considered not interesting, have actually shaped our human history in some degree and those smaller living beings that humans co-exist with today affect us greatly (microbes for example). Also, human politics, economics and cultural forces shape the life of multitude organisms, not only affecting and shaping a human life but with our actions we are shaping multitude of others (Kirksey & Helmreich 2010: 545) or the idea of 'natural cultural contact zones' by Haraway (2008). Ingold (2013) criticizes the multi-species ethnography that for example Kirksey and Helmreich represent. This is due to the focus on the species, the idea of it differentiates and separates (*ibid*: 19). Ingold suggests that we should just go beyond humanity, study with them, not study at them (similar suggestion can be found from Eduardo Kohn's book 'How Forests Think' 2013). Every animate being according to Ingold is *going on* the world (original emphasis, *ibid*: 20) meaning that: "...to be animate—to *be alive*—is to become" (original emphasis, *ibid*). Ingold continues to mention Haraway's 'becoming with' that humans or other beings are what they have become and whom they are with affects them as well. In another source, Ingold also maintains that there is no dichotomy between nature and culture, it is one domain and within it is permeable (2000: 76). Eduardo Kohn resolves this by calling towards anthropology of life (2007: 6) and naming other beings as living selves (*ibid*: 4). Kohn agrees with Haraway that dogs are not here only for us to think with, instead they are here for us to live with (*ibid*) in Ingold suggests to enter into relationships of human and non-human and 'be with' (2000: 76).

## 2.2 Social contract – hunting vs. domestication

In this sub-chapter I will touch upon the subject of domestication as it entails the idea of human power and control over the animals. This is needed in order to evaluate the relationship between human and the guide dog. Hunting then brings different ideas in the human and animal relations, an idea of individualism. An individual hunter is hunting an individual animal where both parties share a brief relationship for the duration of the hunt.

According to Tim Ingold, different definitions of domestication all entail some idea of human control over the animals, plants and nature. Control over the reproduction, growth (2000: 62) and I would also add control over ending the life of animals and plants. Domestication includes the idea of the human ownership over the animals and plants, humans as social persons can own

animals as they are seen as objects (ibid: 64). Animals, plants and nature are used as human tools and material, and their purpose is to serve human needs (ibid: 63). Animals in this sense are seen as objects and tools to enable human work, animals do not themselves work. Animals provide material for humans to work on. According to Ingold, domestication has the same tones as engineering marvel in it as for example ox was man made, making it an artificial construction (Ingold means by this that the ox was domesticated and bred by humans, making it a tool in farming) (ibid). Marx ranks domesticated animals alongside with the primitive tools and as instruments of labour (in Tapper 1988: 52) and tamed animals can enter into social relations of domination (Marx in ibid but also in Ingold 1980: 88), where human is the controlling party. Ingold disagrees with this notion as this would mean that animals are mindless tools or machines, as Ingold puts it, and both parties human and animal constitute work itself and are bound due to this by social relations of production (1980: 88).

Ingold provides alternative terms for the dichotomy of wild and domesticated. These terms are 'trust' and 'domination' (2000: 69) focusing on hunting and pastoralism. Trust can be found in the relationship between the hunter and its prey. If the hunter acts honourably and respects the prey animal, the animal will give itself to the hunter (ibid). In the idea of trust, there exists both autonomy and dependency and the contrast in this is a relationship based on domination (ibid: 70). Domination is present in the pastoralism in the way that humans treat their herd (ibid: 72). Humans decide whether the animal lives and when it dies but also controls the reproduction of the animal. Whereas wild animals might give themselves to the human at the end of the hunt, animals themselves still control their reproduction (ibid). Ingold also maintains, that in the relationship of domination, where humans have control over the animals, it does not mean that the relationship is a negative one. There is still benevolence and caring towards the animals, but the animals themselves are not able to care, they do not have the autonomy to care for themselves (ibid).

Armstrong Oma views Ingold's research differently. Ingold suggests, in Armstrong Oma's words, that hunters view their prey as kindred brothers or souls and that farmers treat domestic livestock as slaves (2010: 175). According to her, when looking from the prey animal's viewpoint, trust is not reciprocated as the prey flees from the hunter indicating that there is no trust (ibid: 177). Armstrong Oma, from her archaeological point of view, suggest that instead of the common dualism in human-animal interactions, trust or domination, referring to Ingold, there is an alternative model. This alternative model is a social contract between humans and animals (Armstrong Oma 2010: 175, but also more about this in Mary Midgley's book 'Animals and Why They Matter' 1983<sup>7</sup>). Mary Midgley claims that all animals that have been successfully domesticated, were once social. These animals transferred their trust to humans, as similarly these animals would trust in the wild their parents and later on the pack leader (in Larrère & Larrère 2000: 55, also in Armstrong Oma 2010: 177). Armstrong Oma explains that this social

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<sup>7</sup> Unfortunately I have not had the access for this book but I have read about through secondary source from Ahto-Hakonen pro gradu thesis 2016 and Larrère & Larrère 2000.

contract defines the terms of engagement and the duties of both parties, entailing trust that she defines as: “[h]umans trust the animals to be docile and cooperative, while animals trust humans to protect them, feed them and take care of them” (2010: 177). This social contract is not equal, it is actually asymmetrical, creating a bond between humans and animals, invoking rights and duties for both (ibid: 178) and there is no third party to oversee that the contract is being kept, it is bound solely on trust (ibid). Larrère & Larrère questions the idea of contract between human and animal. In order to have a contract, there needs to be discussion and reasoning on the both parties’ side (2000: 56). Larrère & Larrère remind us of the social contract in the human society, that it has been communicated through means language, but it has never been signed. Larger collective has agreed to it, it is a collective contract based on the norms which rule and guide humans and their domesticated animals (ibid). Animals and humans do not literally speak the same language but according to Larrère & Larrère the communication has occurred through emotion, affect and interpreted information (ibid). The idea of the contract between humans and domesticated animals supports the claim that it can also be broken by the animal party (ibid). Human parties break the contract more often than animals do by mistreating, using violence or freeing their pets in the nature. For animals to break the contract could mean that they revert back to their wild form, in the case of wild dogs (ibid) or as in the case of Ingold’s research on reindeer, the herd breaks off if the herder cannot make the reindeer herds’ demands (1974: 537). Or in the Münster’s article where the elephant kills its handler, is that a drastic way to end the contract or disagree with it in the first place? In any case, Larrère & Larrère conclude that the contract of domestication is based on fiction but it could give us a way to live together with animals (2000: 57).

Armstrong Oma suggests the mirror opposite from Ingold’s theory of from trust to domination (hunting representing trust and husbandry domination), it is actually from domination (hunting) to trust (animal husbandry) (ibid: 177). Her example of trust comes from archaeological findings from Scandinavia; a longhouse that was shaped in a way that both humans and animals could co-habit and live together. These houses were clearly divided into two different sections, humans and domestic animals each having their own section, but this type of construct helped humans and animals to share their daily rhythm (i.e. milking, shearing) and build trust between them as the humans provided protection from predators for the animals (ibid: 182). According to Armstrong Oma, without the trust factor or social contract, between humans and domestic animals, the Scandinavian Bronze Age agro-pastoral societies would not have thrived. The flocks of animals preserved in rock art and archaeological findings of the long houses indicate this (ibid: 183-184). John Knight’s text (2005) supports Armstrong Oma’s idea of hunting being domination and domestication meaning mutual trust, as Knight also questions Ingold’s theory on hunters’ feelings on mutuality and trust with the hunted animal. Knight describes that the relationship with the hunted animal cannot be repeated individually as the hunted animal is killed at the end of the hunt. There is no individual relationship but instead the relationship is with the class of the prey animal or the collective or the totem of the animal and what it represents (2005: 4-5). Whereas, in domestication, relationships are built with the single animals, the animals are viewed more

personally than hunted animals. Animals do not represent the whole totem of the domesticated animal class, instead the relationship can be found from individual level, thus there is trust, no domination (ibid). Knight continues that in human sociality, humans get to know individual humans, persons, not in general as it is actually suggested in the hunter-prey scenario (ibid). Then again, when looking into hunting and different ethnographies of it, one gets a different perspective. For example, in Rane Willerslev's *Soul Hunters* (2007), the Yukaghirs (living in Siberia) view the animals are being seduced and not hunted. Similar ideas to Ingold's ideas are found in Willerslev's text, that there is some morality in the hunt as the purpose is not to torture the animals, instead it is to be ended quickly and hunt is something that is not taken for granted. It is a battle between the human hunter and the hunted prey animal (more about this theme can be found in Marvin 2005, 2010) and this is also the idea of trust that Ingold writes about (2000). As Knight refers the relationship in hunting is not with the individual animal, it can be with a larger collective or the totemic animal instead (2005: 4).

Another argument or point of view to the idea of individual relationship with the hunted animal and hunter is the idea of personhood. Willerslev writes that for Yukaghirs almost anything has personhood but especially reindeer, elk and bear have this. These animals are closer to humans than other animals are. This is because of these animals' own moral values and conduct in the eyes of Yukaghirs (i.e. the elk is seen as very clean and smart animal that takes care of his family) (Willerslev 2007: 78). For Yukaghirs, killing an individual animal means that they release its soul (Ayibii, also translated as shadow). With the releasing of the soul they ensure that the animal is reborn again and will be hunted in the future (Willerslev 2007: 31). Similar ideas can be found from other northern people, that when animal is hunted, its soul is released and it can be reborn (Ingold 2000: 67). These descriptions give an idea that the relationship between the hunter and the hunted animal is not seen as violent, at least not from the human's side, instead it is seen as reciprocal relationship between the human and the animal or animal master-spirits.

Dogs are treated in differing ways in the hunt and hunting societies. In the case of Yukaghirs, the dog exists in a place between humans and non-humans, in an in-between place, as the dog is the only domesticated animal for Yukaghirs (Willerslev 2007: 76). The dog is sometimes referred to as their children, as it is closer to them than other nonhuman beings. Dogs provide protection from wild animals but are also used in transport (pulling sledges). According to Willerslev, dogs are considered to be dirty as they have promiscuous behaviours, eat faeces and have strong body odour. Thus it is a taboo to feed organs of the hunted animal, such as a heart, to dogs, as they are undeserving of this (ibid). In the case of Finnish bear hunt, in the current days, dogs still maintain a role in the hunt. Eronen & Eronen describe dog's purpose in the hunt (2010: 185). A hunting dog needs to find and follow the bear's tracks, occasionally return back to the hunter and give indication that trace has been found. Once the bear is located, the dog needs to distract and keep the bear in its place by means of barking. This gives the human hunters the opportunity to take down the bear (ibid: 188-189). According to Eronen & Eronen there are certain qualities for a good bear hunting dog. The dog needs to be brave and strong enough to meet the



bear's gaze. This means that the dog cannot be afraid of the bear (it has been said that even the smell of the bear might frighten weaker dogs) but the dog cannot be too brave either as this might lead to suicidal behaviour (being too aggressive with the bear can be fatal for the dog) (ibid: 185). In Kohn's article, among the Runa (living in Upper Amazonia), dogs are seen as conscious and soul-possessing beings as they can detect the hunted prey (2007: 8) but then again most often ignored, not always fed, hunting and doing their own things (ibid: 9). Humans try to emphasise the human side of the dog, by strengthening the good expected behaviour in dogs, such as hunting wild animals, not village animals such as chicken, they should not bite or bark at people thus in the village there is no place for dogs that behave as animals (ibid: 10). One more example from the work of Valerio Valeri's 'The Forest of Taboos' (2000) how the Huaulu (living in Indonesia) regards dogs. Dogs are seen as the object the of strongest of taboos but as also the most valued companion (ibid: 207). There seems to exist a contract between the dogs and hunters, and there are certain obligations and duties involved with this (ibid: 209). Dogs need to help in the hunt and provide food and humans need to feed and take care of the dogs (ibid). The benevolent behaviour towards the dogs changes if the dogs fails to hunt. Normally it is a taboo to kick or beat the dog, but if the dog starts to fail as a hunter, this attitude for the dog changes (ibid: 208). The dog is seen as a quasi-human member of the society (ibid). This is due to the closeness of humans as humans raise and feed the dog (ibid: 207) but also as the dog contains residue of humans (ibid). This relates to the myth of hunting and the origin of humans (ibid: 189, 207), where dogs are formed from the residue of humans, having common origin, but making the dog inferior to humans (ibid). The Wassulau myth describes how dogs represent the process of hunting and cooking wild animals (ibid).

In the human-animal relations the anthropological focus has often been what humans are doing in these relations (Czerny 2012: 7) and due to this, animals are seen as an object and they become animate only when humans are interested in them and need them (ibid: 8). According to Czerny, anthropologists seem to de-personalise animals but still at the same time try to maintain an analytical framework that considers the human-animal relations as a relation between persons (ibid:8). The Western and Euro-American ontologies commonly do not treat animals as persons, instead animals are placed in a hierarchical relation where animals are considered to be lower or lesser beings than humans (ibid: 8). Sarah Czerny examines in her article the relation between dog owners and their dogs in Croatia and she found out that their narratives are more similar to non-Euro-American discourses of human-animal relations (ibid: 8) where animals might more active agents and have personhood. Still, dogs are seen in the relation of ownership, humans owned the dog, but it was more in the terms of responsibility than possession (ibid: 10). One example of the dog having its own personhood, in Czerny's article, is the description of flow of the knowledge, where normally it is unilateral, from the dog owner to the dog (ibid: 13). Czerny states that in her findings the flow is not one-way, as also the dogs have told many things to the owner. For example, the dog's behaviour towards certain people might change the owners' ideas of that person, either making it positive or negative (ibid).

Brožek writes that Locke defines a person as a physiological concept, to be able to reflect on oneself and to be able to do this in different places and times (Brožek 2017: 5). In Brožek, Kant's person is defined as being responsible for one's ethical actions, as self is an empty idea, not a representation (ibid: 6). According to Kant self's role is to unify our inner experiences and due to that Locke's physiological concept is not enough (in Brožek 2017: 6). Knight describes persons to be something that moral obligations and legal entitlements concern (2005: 2). He continues to state that all humans were not always concerned as persons, such as slaves (ibid), or that in the eyes of the first explorers, indigenous people were not seen as persons; "...people are not always persons, so persons are not always people" (2005: 2). This could mean that people do not automatically entail that it is a person. Guide dogs might be able to separate work and free time, thus can they be considered to be able to reflect and have the feeling of identity in different places? Guide dogs can be flexible while working, if there are new and different obstacles on the route, guide dogs can avoid these obstacles and find a different route. In strange places guide dogs can find elevators or other humans for help, for example. Could this already fill the definition of a person by Locke? Kant's idea of responsibility over oneself is more difficult, how can that be seen when thinking about guide dogs. Guide dogs are trained to function and do certain tasks but do they also reflect that is this ethical or not. This is interesting thought deviation from the main research questions of this thesis. As this thesis is not about dogs as persons, I will leave this line of thought here.

In both domains, hunting and domestication, there exists some sort of contract. The question is, that is it a mutual contract and can the social contract be agreed upon by both parties, human and non-human? In a hunting, the relationship that exists between individual parties, between the hunter and hunted, and that relationship is brief. Of course, some might argue that some sort of agreement is made and this agreement is with some other than the hunted animal itself, it could actually be the owner of the forest or animal master-spirits, or some totemic animal. This agreement is then honoured by the hunter by hunting fairly, meaning that certain respect is given to the hunted animal. This then ensures hunting luck for the next time for the hunter. In pastoralism and domestication, the contract between animals is not equal as humans dominate over the relationship, deciding everything on the behalf of the animal. Can this be then with the case of humans and dogs that similarly, if a social contract exists, it is an unequal one? As according to Leach (1964), the dog holds a certain closeness to humans, as the dog has crept inside the house and become a pet and Ingold calls pets as quasi-humans (1988a: 6). Similar importance and closeness to humans can be seen in Willerslev (2007), Kohn (2007) and Valeri (2000). The guide dog then, is not a pet then, at least for the most part of its life. The guide dog can turn down training and future work that would make it to become a guide dog. Can this then give some sort of a hint that there might exist some sort of social contract, not completely equal, but perhaps better understood by the non-human party? As some dogs become other types of working dogs and some become pets. I was tempted to use the word 'decide', as some dogs decide to become, but maybe I will not go that far. An example of this social contract from my field could be one of the interviews with one of the senior trainers. He described, for the work that the

dog does, it receives food and a roof to live under. Thus, humans provide shelter and food and the dog with its work, in this case guide work, helps and contributes to the relationship and co-habitation. Both, the human and the dog benefit from this arrangement. Another similar comment was from one of the guide dog users that the guide dog is an aid tool but of course the guide dog needs to take care of the dog, give good food and relaxation and the dog gives back to the guide dog user through its work.

In the next sub-chapter, I will briefly introduce the human's view on the dog's history and how the profession of guide dogs began.

## 2.3 History of a dog and a Finnish guide dog

Pietiläinen (2013) writes that the dog animals' branch started around 40 million years ago in current North America when theirs and the ancestor bears' branch separated. Around 35 million years ago dog's predecessors were still living on trees. Dog's predecessors started moving towards Asia around 15-17 million years ago and from there to the rest of the world. 1,5 million years ago dog animals separated into different species that are still currently ancestor forms for current wolves, dogs and jackals. (ibid: 10). There has been dog and wolf genetic research that indicates that both dogs and wolves have same ancestor but research on the genetics of the North American grey wolf indicates that when humans moved to North America they spread there with dogs that were already tamed. There is no known genetic close relativeness between the current dogs and the current grey wolves. (ibid: 11).

Human-dog relationships have existed at least 19 000 years or even 30 000 years (Pietiläinen 2014: 8) but perhaps the relationship and co-operation with dogs was not as close as they are nowadays. Dogs during that time were not pets as some of the dogs are now, dogs were domesticated slowly during different times and in different places of Earth (ibid: 11). The extensive relationship with the dogs in Finland is indicated with the old Finnish word "peni" meaning dog, this the oldest word for household animals (ibid) and has been traced to be around 5000 years old (ibid: 33). In the Southern Sweden 6900 – 7250 old grave sites were discovered. The sites contained human and dog bones buried next to human bones. Newer grave sites were separate for dogs. Some dog bones were buried with animal bones that might indicate the importance of the dog in the hunt and in hunter-gatherer societies (ibid:13). Human-dog graves in Finland are found from a later time period, around 400 – 1000 CE (ibid: 12). The dog's robust physiology and other evidence supports that dogs were also used as sleet dogs, pulling sleets thus also helping humans in other tasks than in hunting (ibid: 17) and some researchers have suggested that the earlier dogs might have been used as a food source during leaner times (ibid: 11).

The domestication of dogs is debated and the disagreed facts are when and where the domestication began. One common theory is that dog was domesticated in China, south of

Yangtze river from hundreds of wolves around 16 000 years ago (Unhola 2014: 21). No matter where the dog was domesticated it is probably one of the earliest household animals or pets (Pietiläinen 2013: 15). Dog graves became more popular as we approach modern times (ibid: 28) and the dog's role becomes more important in the human history. In Mesopotamian culture, until around 1700 BC, greyhound looking dogs are found on wall reliefs and paintings. These dogs were used in gazelle hunting. In Iran dogs were used in guarding duties, hunting larger cat animals such as lions but also to fight in wars. In Persia killing dogs were considered as crime. (ibid: 31). Dogs have been present through the history of Egypt (ibid: 34). Couple of descriptions that instruct hunting practices have preserved from Greek times that date around 431-360 BC (ibid: 50). Ancient Romans used dogs in hunting as well and tracing other prey animals (ibid: 55). The dogs was still viewed as work or commodity animal (helping to protect, hunt, and herd for example) in Antique times, whereas during Renaissance the dog was started to be seen as a part of the family (ibid: 57). The Christian church changed attitudes towards dogs as it banned dogs from the members of the church in the year 585 and more generally dogs were banned from churches around the 1600s (ibid: 130). Hunting with dogs became even more popular around this time and different types of dogs existed depending on the hunting type and the prey that was hunted (ibid: 139).

At the end of the 1800s, more organised dog hobbies started to form. This added to the dog's previous roles, that dogs was used for show purposes as well. Organised dog hobby originates from Great Britain as there it was first known custom in recent history that dogs were brought to a certain place on purpose to show others their dog and then compete against other dogs by physical appearance and other qualities (Unhola 2014: 19). Great Britain's Kennel Club was founded in 1873 (Unhola 2014: 19). The Finnish show dog practices started at the end of the 1800s with the Viborg dog show 1887, giving an inspiration to the founding of the Finnish kennel club a couple years after the Viborg dog show (ibid). During the early 1900s, dog hobby in Finland was difficult as Finland gained independence in 1917. The Finnish Civil War started a year later causing famine and poverty, this meant that even less food was available for dogs. Slowly after this, the dog hobby started to rejuvenate (ibid: 63). Many different societies for different hunting dogs were started and actions to rejuvenate some dog breeds were started as well. Training dogs for different roles in war started in Finland after 1918 (ibid: 109) and dogs were trained for; patrol dogs (informing the enemy presence to a soldier), messenger dog (that was carrying messages to different places in the war zone), and then medic dog (that was carrying first-aid equipment on a vest in the battlefield) (ibid: 111). The Second World War caused disruption to the dog hobby in Finland as again there were food shortages and some dogs were needed in the battlefield (ibid: 139).

During the war time, the training of the first guide dogs was started. There are mentions in the history books that the guide dogs might have already been in use in 1700s but these might have been individual cases (Herttuainen 1998: 9). The first guide dog school ever established was in Potsdam in 1923 (ibid: 13). In England, the first guide dog school was established in 1930

(ibid: 15) and in America 1929 (ibid: 22). Organised training in Finland started in 1940 and the first guide dogs were given to people who were vision impaired due to war in autumn 1940 (Unhola 2014: 144, Herttuainen 1998: 30). A lot of ground work was done in the 1930's to be able to have official guide dogs in Finland. Methods used were as such, the lobbying municipal of Helsinki to make an exception to the dog tax in case of guide dogs, applying grants for buying dogs and paying for the trainers. (Unhola 2014: 144). The Guide Dog School was founded in 1947 and the current school was built in 1987 (ibid: 146-147, Opaskoirakoulu, c). Finnish guide dog training was based on ideas from German training as the first guide dogs were received from Sweden and were also trained under the German training. The first dogs were German Shepherds (Opaskoirakoulu, c). The German Shepherd was a popular guide dog breed still in the 1950-60s but German Shepherd's genetic pool was of poor quality (conversation with senior trainer Hannu Qvist, from the Guide Dog School). It came to the point that only one in ten of the dogs was capable to work as a guide dog whereas if around 50% or more from Guide Dog School's Labrador Retrievers made it to the training phase it was more sensible to focus on a certain dog breed with limited resources (interview with head of Kennel Vesa Väkeväinen, from the Guide Dog School). The Labrador Retriever population is also quite large as they are also a very common dog breed for working purposes such as police, customs, border control, and military use them for work purposes and aid dog purposes (interview with senior trainers Janne Ruokonen and Pekka Korri, from the Guide Dog School). German Shepherds bonded with a one person and needed consistency in their training and use whereas Labrador Retrievers are more forgiving for mistakes in training and are gentle dogs and accept more than one person (Hannu Qvist).

At the beginning of the guide dog training in Finland guide dogs were given only to those who were blinded in the Second World War (Koljonen 2018: 2) and later guide dogs were given to people who were working. This was one condition to receive a guide dog (from an interview with a guide dog user). Currently, in order to receive a guide dog, one needs to be blind or have difficult vision impairment (Opaskoirakoulu, d). If one sees too well there is a risk of guiding the dog wrongly and then the purpose for the dog's work, to guide humans, is lost (Koljonen in Luokasmäki news article 2016). Another requirement is that the vision impaired person needs to have a medium physical condition and fitness and needs to be able to use the white stick for basic movement (Opaskoirakoulu, d). There are around 200 guide dog users, at the beginning of 2018 there were 225 guide dog users (Koljonen 2018: 2). There is fluctuation in the numbers of the dogs as some years more dogs retire than in others or there might be some time delay in having guide dogs finishing their training and starting their work. Guide dogs are free for the vision impaired persons as the expenses of the dog are covered by the Guide Dog School, including the dog's training, feeding and medical fees and preventive care (Opaskoirakoulu, d). The Guide Dog School then bills the hospital district (Luokasmäki 2016) or in some cases the insurance company, if the person has lost sight or received vision impairment due to a work accident or a traffic accident (interview with Hannele Ruokonen, from the Guide Dog School).

In the next chapter, I will start building the answers for my research questions, 'do all dogs work and what type of work these dogs do?' In this chapter, I answered to the broader question if animals can work. Münster's example of the mahout and the elephant working together shows that even wild animal, being tamed, can work with humans. Same goes for guide dogs. I will also partly answer to my third research question; 'how is the dog perceived, as a family member, co-worker or a tool for work or aid tool?' towards the end of the next chapter.

### 3. Raising future guides

In Donna Haraway's book: *When Species Meet* (2008: 19), she asks whether the behaviour of animals should be described as play or work. This flow of thoughts started with a story of Derrida's cat. Derrida was coming out from shower and his cat was staring at him. Instead of responding to his cat's gaze and thinking what the cat thought about, Derrida started to think about animals' suffering and the pity of humans. Haraway instead would have wanted to push further in the thinking of: can cats play or animals work? In her view not many have seriously attempted this. I want to ask one of her questions in the form of: can dogs work? In this chapter I will describe how future guide dogs are trained using my fieldwork material and interviews as my ethnographic material. I will discuss how these dogs might differ from average<sup>8</sup> family pets or dogs and touch little bit on my third question relating to how a dog is perceived, is it a family member in this care family setting. As a minor insight I will describe other working dogs from my fieldwork<sup>9</sup>.

#### 3.1 Shaping future working dogs; teaching and raising puppies

Making a working dog is a process that might differ a little bit or maybe not as much as from making and shaping a pet dog for the family life. When I use the terms 'making' and 'shaping' this indicates human involvement but it is clear from my fieldwork material that the dog's own work and willingness to work and train with humans is needed as well. Thus, this 'teaching' and 'raising' is mutual work of the human and the dog. Ingold's "being with" might describe this the best as my observations might indicate. Considering pet dogs and these future working dogs, they both possess the similar dog physics that dictate the everyday life, working dogs need to go out to do their business same as normal family dogs, eat food, play, get human affection and sleep. What I have discovered, from my participant observation and interviews, is that for working

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<sup>8</sup> I think the term 'average' or 'normal' is problematic, as I do not know if there are any average or normal family pets. But my use of the term 'average' means pets that do not work as guide dogs or in any official work such as with the police, customs etc.

<sup>9</sup> My only ethnographic samples from my fieldwork are guide dogs and prison's drug and gun dogs.

dogs the rules are stricter and perhaps certain behaviour is more expected from the working dogs compared to the normal family dogs. The relationship between working dogs and their trainers or users might be closer when compared to family dogs (pets). Working dogs have certain rules and orders that they need to follow no matter what. It is important that the working dog follows and understands rules and commands, as sometimes, if the dog fails to do its work, it might cause fatal accidents or endanger human life. In Clinton Sanders' article (2006) based on police dogs and K-9 police officers in United States, there is a clear juxtaposition or dichotomy how the K-9 police dog is seen. In the article the dog is being described as a family member but also as an object, work tool, in police work. (ibid:148). I will see later in this chapter and further chapters how this is in the case for guide dogs.

Pets are described in Arluke & Sanders book as tame, having qualities that make them almost human, submissive, loving towards human and most often they are treated as children (1996: 170-172). Some have started to call pets as companion animals, according to Arluke & Sanders, this could be due to the fact that pets are seen as submissive, whereas companion animals could be seen more in equal terms with humans, or to have implied mutuality as Arluke & Sanders calls it (ibid: 171). Arluke & Sanders continue to describe in their book that some animals are seen as tools, and these are not then seen as members of the family. These animals are still very valuable in the human society as these animals keep certain institutions running, in their example, these animals are used in science or in farm industry (ibid: 173). According to Arluke & Sanders these animals are turned into scientific data or food, in order to be considered as tools. Animals are deanthropomorphised by becoming as lesser beings and tools (ibid). One example of the deanthropomorphising was in science, regarding research animals. Where normally wild animals and pets are considered to feel and experience pain, these lab animals were not entitled or considered to feel pain. This example was based on the observation that these lab animals did not receive any anaesthetics during and after operations and surgeries done for research purposes (ibid: 173-174). Lab animals were assigned as numbers or meaningless names thus transformed and treated as data in the research (ibid). In my research the concept of pet is important, as I will use it as comparative means when looking into guide dog puppies and working guide dogs. Similarly guide dogs are called as tools but are they seen in the same way as Arluke and Sanders defines? I will answer to these in this and later chapters.

Based on my fieldwork, while guide dog puppies are growing up for the possible purpose of being guides, during in training and then in working as guides, these dogs are not seen as pets. During puppy time these dogs have certain rules and limitation that normal pet dogs might not have such as playing with ball or playing throwing games. If the puppy learns to run after a ball or a frisbee, this will turn into dangerous behaviour as an adult. While working, guiding outside, what if someone throws a ball or something else and the dog remembering old games as a puppy rushes to catch the ball, taking the vision impaired person with. Puppies are not supposed to be allowed in the bed or other furnishing whereas normal pets might not have these limitations. The limitation is because not everyone wants a dog on their sofa or bed and if the dog has already

learned this behaviour during as a puppy, it is very difficult to unlearn it. During training, even more is demanded from these young dogs as they are trained for work purpose. Training takes around 20 weeks and takes full-on focus from the trainer as well. While working as guides they need to be used for that purpose. All the work in care families and training is wasted if the dog is not used for guiding, and instead would be used as normal pet. One of the guide dog users that I interviewed mentioned this as well: guide dogs are for work purpose, as they are quite expensive dogs and if the guide dog user would want a pet, the guide dog user would buy one, guide dog is not that (pet). Yle News published an article about the guide dog's price a couple years ago (Loukasmäki 2016). It is around 20 euro per day and this includes all the vet bills and preventive care. The article also mentions that the trained dog is wasted if it is not used for work purposes and if the vision impaired person sees too well, a guide dog might not be suitable as the person starts guiding the dog, not the other way around as it is supposed to work (ibid). It is the dog's future work, training and effort that people put into the dog that makes it different from a pet. These dogs are also raised for someone else, where in the case of pet dogs, the general idea is that this is for that one person who purchases the dog. The guide dog puppy, from the very beginning, is for and is trained for someone else and for a future work purpose.

I will now explain how guide dogs are raised and shaped based on my ethnographic research<sup>10</sup>. I will use the abbreviation 'CF' for care families and a number after CF to distinct if a different care family is used. For example, CF5 means that this is care family number five in my interview material and when I refer to CF5 I mean this same family throughout my material. Only families that I have done interviews with are given a number and there are five of these families in total (CF1-CF5). In the puppy training sessions I saw, spoke with and observed many different care families but as I did not do any official recordings with these care families, I only refer them as care families here without any abbreviation or number. Also notice that I will use the term care family even if the care family consists of only one member (there are no spouses, or children in this family) or the care family might have two adults or adult and child/children. Later in this chapter, I will also mention the guide dog users that I did interviews with. I will use a similar method of abbreviation as I did with the care families. Thus, the first guide dog user that I have interviewed is referred to as GDU1 and the second person that I interviewed is GDU2, throughout this thesis.

Future guide dog puppies are born either at home or at the Guide Dog School's kennel. Nowadays it is more popular to have home birth. When the puppies are around 3 or 4 weeks old, they are brought to the Guide Dog School's kennel with their dam. During their time in the Guide Dog School's kennel, puppies are introduced to different people, so that already at an early stage, puppies form relationships with different humans. Puppies are taken outdoors, on car rides or other activities are organised in order to introduce different environments to the puppies. At 7 weeks old puppies will go to the different volunteer care families' homes. Requirement to be able to become a care family is that there is an adult present regularly during daytime especially when

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<sup>10</sup> Same basic information can be found on the Guide Dog Schools website: <http://opaskoirakoulu.fi/>; (Opaskoirakoulu, b)



the puppy is young. This will help the puppy to create attachment and relationships with humans but also keep the puppy from doing any destructive actions or behaviour. The care family needs to have time and energy for the training of the puppy. Care families should neither have other young puppies nor adolescent dogs present but older family dogs and or other pets are allowed. Other young puppies or adolescent dogs might hinder the stricter training that guide dog puppies need. As one care family with an older dog mentioned about going out and walking routines:

CF1: *“And going outside, I do not even take them out together. Because this guide dog [meaning the guide dog puppy] needs to walk beside me all the time and only with permission it can go to smell. And my own dog goes to where, like all dogs go, the nicest smells are to be found.”*<sup>11</sup>

Care families are different types of people, some with some having background in raising dogs and others have no history or previous experience with dogs. Families vary from single person homes to homes with different aged and number of children, having other pets and adults. The age of the care families varies as well, some care families were young couples or adults under their twenties, some were middle aged or retired people. Some of the care families have had other guide dog puppies or have had their own dogs whereas some are first time dog carers<sup>12</sup>. One care family might have puppies from different litter at the same time or a little bit overlapping so that puppies are different aged. Some have dogs that are already in the training phase and then they take a new puppy, thus during weekends at their home, one care family can have several dogs, all training to be guide dogs in different phases. Some care families take only one puppy. Some have even couple of years of absence before they take a new puppy and some have a puppy only once meaning that they do not continue as a care family. The care family receives the puppy but the Guide Dog School owns these dogs. The Guide Dog School also provides vet services either at the school or by paying the veterinarian costs if some other vet clinic needs to be used. Care families then need to transport puppies, attend the puppy training classes and also take care of the dog's food costs and follow the Guide Dog School's instructions and guidelines.

In some cases, care families will give up raising a puppy in the middle of the puppy's training and then a new care family is found for the puppy. In one of my interviews I heard about a case where there were only a couple of weeks left before puppy testing, a testing that might dictate the puppy's future as a working dog or as an average family dog. Passing those tests would mean for the puppy to eventually start training in the Guide Dog School. Even though there were only couple weeks left, the care family did not want to continue raising the puppy. There are

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<sup>11</sup> “CF1: Ja sitten ulkoilussahan on, että mä en käytä niitä edes yhdessä, koska ton opaskoiran pitää kulkea vierellä koko aika ja sitten se saa mennä vaan luvan kanssa sinne haistelemaan. Ja sitten taas oma koira menee siellä, niin kuin koirat yleensä menee, siellä missä kivoimmat hajut löytyy.”

<sup>12</sup> I do not use the word 'owner' here as in a normal situation one would own a dog, but in the case of guide dogs, the Guide Dog School owns the dogs and lends those puppies or dogs to care families or users.

also cases where the care family's personal situation changes and caring for a puppy is no longer an option. One also has to think about the physical condition of the care family, as most often guide dog puppies are Labrador or Labrador and Golden Retriever mixes thus the dog's size is quite large and heavy after the smaller puppy develops into an adolescent dog. Puppies also have a lot of energy which surprises many people. Growing puppies need a lot of physical activity but also activity which exhausts brain thus also tiring the dog mentally. Physical tiredness alone is not enough as when puppies have energy to spend, they might destroy something inside the house where they live, such as smaller things as shoes developing into larger damage such as couch or even walls and doors.

The Guide Dog School arranges puppy training sessions twice a week. Sometimes there are more sessions if trainers have time or there is interest and requests from the care families. Most often those training sessions are in the afternoon so that working people can join in. Occasionally, training sessions are arranged during daytime as well benefitting people with different work schedules or people having more time during the day. The sessions normally take around one hour and the partaking puppy number is around 3-7 puppies and their care families per session. There is a limited number of places in the sessions if a dog trainer is solely responsible for the sessions. When I was in the sessions at the beginning of my fieldwork, there were two student trainees helping the dog trainer so the number of participants was not limited as much. Later on, when these trainees completed their training, the trainer held some of the sessions alone. During these sessions, the number of participating dogs would be around seven. If there were more care families interested then sessions would be split into two different sessions. For example, on Tuesdays there was normally only one session, but if the trainer was alone and there was more demand, there would be two sessions to accommodate all participating care families. These training sessions seemed to be very popular, occasionally all the places for a certain session were gone within a very short time after the session was announced. The training sessions were announced in a Facebook group beforehand and the announcement included the location, the theme and limitation for participants. Puppy training classes were a quite recent addition, only in place for a couple of years. Before that the focus was more on the care families to train at home but trainers would help if needed. Before there would only be a couple official meetings and then the dog would be assessed that would it be ready for training and becoming a guide. Nowadays with these active puppy training classes the recommendation for minimum participation is two puppy classes per month. There are some exceptions if, for example, the care family is very experienced in raising guide dog puppies and has successfully raised many before. The Guide Dog School arranges assessments during different phases of the puppies' development. The assessments were done based on puppy litters and the reason for this was see the litters development and find out any future problems that needed early prevention.

Each of the puppy classes had different themes, for example in one session we had an introduction to rally toko (a form of dog obedience competition where the dog needs to do certain tasks in a race course), agility or sessions held outside. For example, in one of the outside training

sessions puppies were having scent training and training to find their care families in the woods (also form of scent training/tracking). Some training sessions were only walking the dogs on a leash and walking so that the puppies were walking nicely, not pulling too much on the leash or bouncing from side to side, or smelling too much during the practiced walk. Quite often puppy classes were inside shopping centres and with the shop owner's permission puppies were able to visit different shops with their training vests on (see figure 1.). Most often pet shops were visited as they normally allow dogs any way. Pet shops provide a good training place as well as pet shops contain many temptations for the puppies, with treats, dog foods and toys displayed. Clothes stores were visited also and most importantly some grocery stores allowed puppies to go and walk inside the store and the food department. Some shops allow dogs but grocery stores usually ban all other dogs except assistance dogs and guide dogs. Grocery stores were challenging to some of puppies as there were more different scents and different sorts of foods that were tempting. Sometimes accidents happened indoors, peeing or even pooping, although this was not the purpose as all the puppies went outside for their needs before they were taken indoors. But it is normal for a young puppy to have accidents especially in a new and exciting environment.



Figure 1. Guide dog puppy with a vest saying on the right in Finnish: "Isona minusta tulee opaskoira" ("When I grow up, I will become a guide dog"; loosely translated) On the left there is the Guide Dog School's logo and text "Opaskoirakoulu" (the Guide Dog School).

The themes of the puppy classes varied a lot giving care families different ideas and tools on what to do with the puppies and how to train them. The training sessions were held together with the trainer and other care families, so that basic obedience would be trained. Other care families provided support as many times they might have similar problems or issues. Of course, other care families might also create pressure on others as some puppies seemed to be very easy to train and learned very fast compared to some others who needed more focus. In these puppy sessions there was age difference among the puppies. Some of the puppies were very young, just arrived to the care family's home and some of the puppies were adolescent close to the age when they are tested for further training. Most of the work for training and raising the puppy has to be done at home alone with the puppy. One of trainers and student trainees made

house visits if there was a problem that the care family wanted to be solved or wanted to receive guidance and training. For example, one of the house visits where I was able to participate, dealt with the puppy biting and jumping towards people and strangers. House visits allow the dog to be trained in familiar setting (home) and with more privacy as there are no other dogs taking away the attention from the trainers nor there is rush involved. It might be also more comfortable to ask questions and advice without the other care families hearing about it. Care families receive certain instructions on how the dogs should be trained. Puppies should be accustomed to different places, noises, public transport and different human crowds. There are some limitations to what the care family can train and teach. For example, escalators are one of the limitations, escalators can be only taught with the trainer when the dog is at the training phase. The same applies to clicker training (using a clicker to teach desired behaviour). It was also advised that too much training or activity was bad for the puppy. It might tire out the puppy and cause larger issues later on, one of those is that the puppy does not want to train and work anymore. This was called having a burnout in human terms. I heard that care families had private Facebook groups for certain puppy litters and also there was the Guide Dog School's private puppy group. I was told that most often people also asked their fellow care families advice on different behaviours or other things. Many were interested if similar problems occurred with other puppies from the same litter. I did not have access to these Facebook groups but I heard about these during my time in the field.



Figure 2. A puppy training session at the Helsinki-Vantaa airport in April 2017. All puppies are wearing training vests and some are more relaxed and others are more interested on possible treats. Picture taken by myself.

I will describe one of the puppy training session here in detail to give an example what it was like. This puppy training session is also shown in figure 2. I decided to crop the picture in figure 2. as this picture has not been public on Facebook and the original picture shows the care families' faces. Of course, the care families are recognisable in the picture for others that are deeply involved in the Guide Dog School or were care families during the same time (recognised based on the puppies/adolescent dogs in the picture). The puppy session started at the Tikkurila train station where a meeting place and time was agreed beforehand. After all were present, the care families with puppies and the trainer proceeded to the train platform using elevators. Puppies were wearing their training vests, white vests as shown in figure 1 earlier and also in figure 2. We boarded the train going towards the airport, this was also good practice to travel in public transport. Training session was during daytime thus it was not too busy on the train. We spread

out in one of the train carriages, some puppies started to lie down relaxed, occasionally taking a lot of space and some were sitting nicely next to the care family. The puppies behaved very well on the train, making almost no noise, although there were a couple occasional barks. We departed the train at the airport station and took the elevator to higher level in order to access airport. We walked to the airport departure hall, went upstairs using the staircase, to see the hall area and then down again. The purpose was to practice walking up and down the stairs. There were some people around but it was Wednesday and during daytime, thus the airport was not too busy. After the departure hall area, we went to the lower level of the airport, inside the parking area. Here we practiced walking nicely and waiting in front of the crossroads before they could be crossed. The puppies were able have a pee break as well. I was able have a chance on trying walking one of the puppies for a short period. We then proceeded to go to a coffee place to have a small break, some care families ordered something to drink or something small to eat. This was good practice for the puppies as well, as they needed to be able to relax in a public setting with different people walking, sitting and talking around them and with smells of food and drinks distracting them. After a break of 20 minutes or so, we proceeded to go back to the departure hall where we took the picture from figure 2. After this we proceeded back to the train station and boarded the train. The puppy school session ended and the care families either continued via train to their home or somewhere else.

This puppy session described above lasted more than two hours and involved a lot of different types of learning for the puppies and the care families, such as: transitioning to different places via public transportation, using elevator, stairs and walking in different surfaces of pavement (e.g. platform, inside the station, elevator, airport floor, parking hall) just for an example. Purpose was to accustom to different smells, different people, and settings. Important in this practice was to walk calmly in the different settings and not get excited about the new surroundings. The coffee break could also be seen as practice for switching off from the work-mode but not completely as the white vests were still on. Following commands is also very exhausting and the training session was a long one, thus the coffee break was also welcomed break for the puppies. Guide dogs are also used in social settings, in coffee places, supermarket, restaurant thus it is important that the dog has already learned these different settings and how to behave in these settings. Puppies were rewarded with treats during the training every time the puppy succeeded in something or behaved very well. This can be seen in figure 2. as the black puppy, on the right in the picture, is just about to receive treat while the picture was taken. Another black puppy, on the left in the picture, is looking into the care family's hand if there are any treats to be found. The third black puppy at the middle is relaxing by laying down. This is a very normal situation with these puppies or guide dogs, while not actively working, guiding, they are either sitting or if a longer period has passed, they will lay down and even take occasional naps.

One of my interviewee's, CF1, described training a guide dog puppy at home:

CF1: *"[. . .]one needs to stop in front of the pedestrian crossing, always, every time. And one thing is that one does not bounce around, with the leash, cannot pull and other stuff.*

*Often it is that everything just happens or comes by itself but it is not like that. Similarly like with children, children need to be taught that this is the way how it works and together do it. And so, dog will also learn that this is the way that needs to be behaved with this human.”<sup>13</sup>*

*CF2: “For me it has been very difficult to remember that I need to stop in front of every pedestrian crossing and always when you cross the road you need to stop. I am used to just to walk[. . .]In seriousness you just need to stop[. . .]Everywhere else when we go to stairs we stop, in front of door we stop.”<sup>14</sup>*

CF2 mentioned that having this puppy was sometimes difficult as she had to remember to act differently. Stopping in front the stairs at home was impossible to remember all the time, but always outside from home this was practised. The family’s older dog helped with the training as well, as the older dog commanded the guide dog puppy not to jump on the sofa. Or if they heard that the puppy was doing something in another room, the older dog went to see what the guide dog puppy was doing. CF2 mentioned that there were some advantages of having another older dog, especially if the older dog was properly trained. Although both dogs did some mischief as they both (the older dog and the guide dog puppy) destroyed a toilet paper roll together. Similarly, in front of stairs was another place where the care family and the puppy need to stop. Sniffing different scents outside was discouraged and the puppy was encouraged to walk next to the care family member who was walking the dog. Playing fetch games, with balls, sticks, frisbees etc., was forbidden. Sitting or sleeping on the sofa, bed or other furnishing was forbidden as well. While the guide dog puppy is wearing a vest there can be no contact with other humans or dogs. Different care families (CF2, CF3) mentioned that they need to keep in mind that this dog is trained for someone else. One of the care families explained to me the difference between an own dog and then this guide dog puppy:

*CF3: “There is a lot of difference. Maybe the biggest difference is that one is raising and training the dog for someone else. You cannot think about your own needs or how you would like the dog to be, instead you need to follow the guidelines that the Guide Dog School gives and teach what needs to be taught, and think where to go with the dog and how it should be. That is maybe the biggest that one needs to think, this will not be my dog and I will not get it”<sup>15</sup>*

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<sup>13</sup> CF1: “[...]pitää pysähtyä suojatien eteen aina, joka kerta. Ja just ettei palloile niinku ympäriinsä, sen remmin kanssa koira, eikä vedä tai muuten. Monesti ajatellaan, että kaikki sujuu itsestään, mutta ei se mene itsestään, kuten tavallaan lastenkin kanssa se pitää opettaa niille että näin se onnistuu ja että yhdessä tekee sen. Ja koira oppii, että näin pitää käyttäytyä tämän ihmisen kanssa.”

<sup>14</sup> CF2: “Itsellä on hirveän hankala muistaa, että jokaisen suojatien eteen pitää pysähtyä ja aina kun sä menet tien yli pitää pysähtyä. Mähän olen tottunut vaan, että kävelen.[...]Oikeasti pitää vaan pysähtyä.[...]Kun kaikkialla muualla mennään portaisiin pysähdytään, oven eteen pysähdytään.”

<sup>15</sup> CF3: “On siinä paljon eroa, se on ehkä suurin ero että kasvattaa ja kouluttaa koiraa jollekin toiselle, että ei voi ajatella sitä omaa tarvetta ja millainen sinä itse haluaisit, että koira olisi vaan vähän niitä linjoja mitä Opaskoirakoulu antaa ja mitä koiralle tulisi opettaa ja missä pitäisi käyttää ja millainen sen pitäisi olla. Se on ehkä semmoinen suurin jota joutuu monesti miettimään, että tämä ei tule mulle tämä koira”

That might be one of the biggest differences compared to a pet dog. CF2 continued that the guide dog's job is important, as CF2 mentioned that if the dog would do something risky it could cause lives, that is why the training is important. CF2 trains the guide dog puppy by trying to think different needs that the future guide dog user would have, such as going to different places with the dog, places where the user would go and then also think of the places that might not be necessary to train. CF2 also tried to anticipate different situations as for example before our interview in a restaurant, in a shopping mall, the dog had a long walk and thus during our interview was very calm, lying under the table and occasionally was in a deep sleep.

CF2: *"With this one, I try to think that where I can go with this dog. It does not make sense to go to the gas station and fill the car as the user [the guide dog user] does not need to fill up their car with this dog. I am going to go to a gym, and notice, I hate gyms, but I was able to take one free training hour and I was allowed to take the dog with me [a guide dog puppy] and I do not know if the user would want to [go to the gym]. There are a lot of noises, bangs, different scents, people. This way I need to or at least I try to think."*<sup>16</sup>

After the guide dog puppies are around 1 year or 1½ years old they are tested. Testing involves physical tests done by a vet: X-rays on pelvis, knees and other joints and possible MRI scans. I heard, while doing my fieldwork, that there was one litter of which some of the puppies had epilepsy. A vet needed to do brain MRI scans of the puppies from the same litter in order to see if all the puppies had the same disease or if the disease was only in some of the puppies. Puppies in general have to be put down if there are any serious health issues. This was sadly the case for this litter of puppies. Some of the puppies with severe epilepsy did not survive. Some other physical or medical conditions might also stop the puppy from becoming a guide dog but still might be sold to a private owner or family if the physical or medical condition is not that serious and the dog's life quality does not suffer. This type of a dog then has a chance to become a pet when its physical condition stops it from having a working career.

Another type of testing is behaviour testing. Dog trainers walk the dogs and see if they are able to walk straight without any bouncing from side to side or running and making sudden stops (this is only to assess if the dog has capability for this, dogs are trained more for this after passing the tests). There is also a testing called IFT testing where puppies are tested in different ways<sup>17</sup>. I did not observe the assessment and selection for dogs for the training phase. There are two trainers who have 50 years of experience in dog training together. They make the assessment together, deciding which puppies will continue to the training phase or which puppies/dogs fail.

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<sup>16</sup> CF2: "Tämän kanssa yritän miettiä kaikkea, että mihin kaikkialle tämän kanssa voi päästä. Ei ole järkeä mennä huoltoasemalle tankkaamaan autoa, koska käyttäjän ei tarvitse tankata autoa tämän koiran kanssa. Olen menossa kuntosalille ja ota huomioon mä inhoan kuntosaleja, mutta mä menen ottamaan yhden ilmaisen tunnin koska saa ottaa luvan ottaa koiran mukaan ja en tiedä jos se käyttäjä haluaa. Koska siellä on hajuja, ihmisiä, kolinaa. Niin sillä tavalla pitää tai mä yritän miettiä."

<sup>17</sup> Due to the non-disclosure agreement I cannot specify this testing any further.

Occasionally, they see potential in some of the puppies but decide that they are still too young so they send those puppies to grow for a couple of months in the care family's place. Puppies that fail the testing are sold to either care families if they have opted to take them or then are sold to outsiders. Most often if trainers see that the dog has potential to be a working dog but not a guide dog, they offer the dog to other officials such as customs, police, assistance dog organisations (as shown in figure 3.), corrections etc. Some dogs that are, for example, too interested in odours cannot make good guide dogs but might make excellent customs dogs. Some of the guide puppies, female gender, are also kept for breeding purposes. These dogs are seen to have very good qualities and genetics so that they are reserved for breeding. Thus, some of these dogs go straight to the care family and the care family then agrees that the dog is used for breeding. During my field, I heard that some female guides (already working as guides) are used for breeding.



Figure 3. A former guide dog puppy (same dog as in the figure 1. where it was a small puppy), from the Guide Dog School and trained by one of the care families during puppy period, during my fieldwork. This dog is now working as an assistance dog.

I will briefly describe shaping and raising drug and gun dogs based on my one interview and observation with a dog trainer who is working in corrections, in a prison with his dogs. He had one working dog, a Labrador Retriever and another younger dog, a Border Collie, in training to replace the older working dog. I will use this here as an example as raising these working dogs differs from raising guide dogs. In the case of prison working dogs, dogs were selected from the litter of puppies with the help of other dog trainers. With the first dog the training was done at the Police Dog School with the puppy and the trainer being there. In my interview the dog trainer said that with the first dog everything was trained through play and this can be seen from the dog even today, the dog was very playful. With the second dog, the dog trainer trained the dog by himself and with less play than with the first dog. The older dog was 9 years old and the younger was 1½ years old. The Finnish government owns these two dogs but both live in and go to work from the trainer's house. The trainer said that there are tests every year and in order for the dog to continue to work and keep its working license, the dogs need to pass those tests. The tests are assigned



to evaluate the sense of smell needed to distinguish the different drug substances that the drug dogs need to find and mark. The scent of guns is trained and tested as well. The older dog marked drug substances with scratching whereas the younger dog started to lie in front of it and showed it with its snout. Apparently, nowadays training with scratching is discouraged as the dog might destroy surfaces such as cars or break the hidden drug stashes. The training sessions are held at home and also at the work place. Sometimes the dog trainer hides drug substances into inmates' cells or into other places in the prison in order for the dogs to find something and also practice. Training has to be regular in order to keep the dog's senses sharp and the dog needs to have a feeling of success (finding the correct scent) every once in a while. According to the dogs' trainer, the dogs are working all the time. During a walk they might find a scent for drugs for example, even without a request to search for them.

Clinton Sanders did a study (2006) regarding K-9 police officers and their patrolling dogs. In this study there is a dichotomy between dog as an object (working tool) and as an individual with whom one creates a relationship and a mutual bond with (ibid: 149). This dichotomy has implications for the training of dogs. With dog as an object, certain behaviour models that shape, or *mold* (original emphasis) the dog's behaviour and then there can be certain expectations that the dog behaves in a certain way that is acceptable and the behaviour can be predicted (ibid). Whereas, when dogs are seen as individuals, they are educated, or *taught* (original emphasis) based on a shaping relationship (between the dog and the trainer) and in this way dogs will learn expectations and roles in order to work together (ibid). Sanders found out that there was strong dichotomy between patrol dogs as an object-weapon and with dogs as a friendly, reliable partner and a family member and as an asset for public relations (ibid: 150). In chapter 4 I will discuss more at length the subject of the dog seen as an object. In my participant observation of puppy training sessions, I did not see a distinction for dogs or puppies being treated as objects (work tools). What I saw was more that the puppies were treated as individuals with their different characteristics and personalities that dictated the training methods and different problem areas and solutions for different puppies. Some puppies liked to chew on things, some were too interested in different scents, some were difficult to walk, some had problems with obedience, some liked to jump towards people and so on. Thus, there was no single solution that would fit all the different puppies that behaved differently. Same applied to the care families that were training these puppies, they also had different methods and ways of training. Emphasis in training was the puppy's involvement and being with the puppy all the time. Puppies needed to be willing to participate in different training sessions. Thus, this would indicate mutual involvement in the training. In the next sub-chapter, I will discuss how these puppies, working dogs and guide dogs were seen.

### 3.2 Differing from the average family dog?

“My dogs are very, very valuable and precious work tools”, the dog trainer said at prison, when I interviewed him. I was trying to find out how he sees and feels about the two dogs that he works with. He also said that they are family members as well but I sensed a small distinction, or dichotomy, between work and home. As the trainer describes that at home, dogs cannot come to the upstairs at all, thus even at home there was a distinction with these dogs and perhaps pet dogs. Similar findings were in Sanders study (2006: 148), K-9 police officers thought of their dogs as family members but also as tools in their work. In the case of K-9 dogs at home they were seen as part of the family but with slight distinction. Officers were all the time aware of the dog’s capabilities to attack other humans or even the officers and this made the dogs seen as unpredictable. In one example from Sanders’ article, during training one of the dogs actually lunged towards Sanders (ibid: 152). K-9 officers had to advise other family members or visitors to be careful around the dog, as it was also a work tool, trained to use force against humans and thus unpredictable as it was still an animal (ibid: 166).

CF1, CF3, CF4 and CF5 considered the guide dog puppies as family member, CF4 thought guide dog puppies more as her children that would eventually leave the nest. CF3 had reminded that the both dogs that CF3 was raising would eventually leave. CF3 had already raised one puppy that was currently in the training phase and the younger puppy participated to the puppy training sessions.

CF3: *“Q: How do you see a care dog (guide dog puppy), is it your family member? CF3: Yes, yes they are. But we have this attitude that both of them go eventually. It is a big thing when that (older dog in training, name removed) leaves and also this (referring to the guide dog puppy, name removed), but.”*<sup>18</sup>

CF2 tried not to make the association that the guide dog puppy is a family member on purpose, as then CF2 would be attached too much to it. CF2 continued to explain that there is a difference between CF2’s own dog and this guide dog puppy. In the previous sub-chapter, it was mentioned, that CF2 was always trying to think what would the future guide dog user need and then CF2 would train the puppy accordingly.

CF2: *“Q: Do you think that this dog is your family member, or how do you view it? Is it some sort of a worker, a work tool, an aid tool, a dog, heh (I made a short laugh as I*

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<sup>18</sup> CF3: “K: Miten näet hoitokoiran, onko se sun perheenjäsen? CF3: On, on ne meillä. Mutta siihen on asennoiduttu, että molemmat lähtee. Onhan se iso juttu kun se lähtee ja tämän myös, mutta.”

*realised that I was asking was it a dog), what? CF2: Well it is a dog. I try very hard not to see it as a family member as then I will get too attached to it.”<sup>19</sup>*

*CF5: “[. . .]It is easier to know that this dog is on a loan and that the Guide Dog School covers all the vet stuff and the only cost is food or some toys if one wants”<sup>20</sup>*

CF5 was little bit relieved that the Guide Dog School owned the dog as it was easier with the vet and every serious decision was the Guide Dog School's responsibility. But CF5 continued that they already had made a commitment for the dog that when the dog would retire (if it would be able to have a working career) they would like to be asked to take it for the retirement as they already committed to the dog.

*CF5: “If the dog (dog’s name removed as in the interview it was referred to via name) goes to work and when it is time for it to retire, I would hope that I am asked first, if I want to take it for retirement. That would be nice. I have informed them that I would love to take. Q: You are committed to the dog? CF5: Yes. If one takes a pet, it can be 10 or 2 years[. . .]”<sup>21</sup>*

In Sanders’ study of guide dogs, one of the guide dog users said that the dog was not her child; it was her eyes (2000: 137). Some of the guide dog users saw more of the utility purpose for the dogs, whereas some, saw dogs as their children or family members (ibid). Inspired by this article, I asked something similar from one of the guide dog users, GDU2, in my meeting (this part was not recorded). I asked GDU2 that does it feel like that the guide dog is GDU2’s eyes. GDU2 mentioned that it did not feel that the guide dog was an extension of GDU2’s body. Of course, some might feel this if for example they were born blind, but GDU2 did not make this distinction. But GDU2 explained that there is a difference when using the white stick and then walking with the guide dog, even though the dog is not an extension of the body, one still feels the world differently.

*GDU2: “It is not very easy, to go with the stick. When you go about and bounce around and you hear that the bus is coming but it is not that simple, that you will be able to find the door and the door step and how high your foot needs to be. But when you have a*

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<sup>19</sup> CF2: “K: Miellätkö sit tätä hoitokoiraan ollenkaan sun perheenjäseneksi, tai missä niin kuin suhteessa sä katsot sitä, että onko se tavallaan työntekijä, työväline, apuväline, koira, heh, mikä? CF2: Koira se ainakin on. Yritän olla hirveästi sitä mieltämättä perheenjäseneksi, koska sit mä kiinnyn siihen niin kun liikaa.”

<sup>20</sup> CF5: “[. . .]Helpottaa jollain lailla, sitä, että tietää että on nimenomaan sijoituksessa ja sitten se, että Opaskoirakoulu hoitaa kaikki lääkärin ja ei tule kustannuksia muuta kuin ruuat ja jos haluaa leluja.”

<sup>21</sup> CF5: “Jos koira (nimi poistettu) menee töihin ja siinä vaiheessa, kun se jää eläkkeelle, toivoisin, että multa kysyttäisiin ensin, että haluaisitko ottaa sen eläkepäiville. Että se tulisi tavallaan takaisin. Että sekin olisi kivaa. On ilmoittanut, että ottaa sen mielellään eläkepäiville viettämään. K: On sitoutunut koiraan? CF5: Kyllä joo. Jos ottaa lemmikin, se voi olla 10 vuotta tai 2 vuotta[. . .]”

*dog, you feel everything, you do not need to look for the door, it will take you straight to it.”<sup>22</sup>*

I asked from both guide dog users that I interviewed that how did they see the guide dog, was it a family member, a tool, an aid tool or what. Responses differed a little bit between these two guide dog users:

*GDU1: “Every dog becomes a family member, when they are with me longer. They are family members... I had different situations, I had family when I had a dog and now the couple last dogs have come when I have been living alone. That is a different situation as well. They become a good buddy and of course a helper, in a good way. It provides company and help. It is a family member. Absolutely.”<sup>23</sup>*

*GDU2: “Guide dog is for movement and not just being at your company. For me, even though it sounds raw, it is a tool, it is an aid tool. I just need to have that attitude, it is not a pet.[ . . .]Reciprocity[ . . .]When my life occasionally depends on it[ . . .]When I need to trust it so much, I need to take care of it. Q: Is it a family member? GDU2: Well, I have the attitude that I cannot get too attached, but of course it is one part of it. I have small children and my children feel that it is part of the family, a member of the family. And when you take the harness off, it is a normal dog, one exception that you cannot throw anything...Children feel that it is. I hate to say it, for me it is an aid tool. You are not allowed and cannot get attached to it[ . . .]The relationship needs to be fair, it works really hard and it needs to be rewarded and ensured that everything is good.”<sup>24</sup>*

*GDU2: “Q: When you think about this dog (name removed, I was referring to the guide dog) and your own dogs, were your own dogs closer? GDU2: Well maybe, when you think about it, there was more of attachment. And they were different, the were on the bed and on the couch, it is different. It (referring to the guide dog, name removed) is not allowed to be there[ . . .]It ruins the authority[ . . .]When it gets same status as you[ . . .]Most of*

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<sup>22</sup> GDU2: “Se ei ole mikään helppo laji, se kepillä meno. Sit kun sä kohellat tuolla ja sä kuulet että bussi tulee mutta se ei ole niin yksinkertaista, että sä löydät sen oven sieltä ja löydät sen kynnyksen sieltä, et kuinka korkealle jalka. Mutta sit kun sulla on koira sä tunnet kaiken, sun ei tarvitse etsiä sitä ovea ja kun se vie sut suoraan sinne.”

<sup>23</sup> GDU1: “Kyllähän perheenjäseneksi tulee jokainen koira tulee, kun ne on tossa pidempään. Ei siitä pääse mihinkään, perheenjäsenhän se on.[ - -]Mullakin on monta eri tilannetta, perhe on ollut aikoinaan ja koira on tullut ja nyt pari viimeistä koira on tullut silleen, että mä olen ollut jo yksin asuva. niin sehän on kanssa eri tilanne sekin. Kyllähän niistä hyvä kaveri tulee ja tietysti apulainen, siinä hyvässä mielessä. Että siitä on seuraa ja siitä on apua. Perheenjäsenhän se on. Ehdottomasti.”

<sup>24</sup> GDU2: “Opaskoira tulee liikkumiseen eikä siihen että se on sun seurana. Mullekin se on, vaikka se tuntuu raadolliselta, mutta se on mulle työkalu, että se on apuväline. Et se on vaan otettava sillä asenteella, että se ei ole lemmikki[ - -]Vastavuoroisesti[ - -]kun oikeastaan mun henki on ajoittain sen varassa[ - -]Kun joutuu luottamaan niin paljon niin pitäähän siitä pitää hyvää huolta. K: Onko koira perheenjäsen? GDU2: No joo siis, mutta mä oon ottanut vähän sen asenteen, että mä en voi niin kiintyä siihen, että totta kai se on on yksi osa. Mullakin on pieniä lapsia, niin kyllähän ne on kokenut, että se on perheenjäsen. Ja kun valjaat otetaan pois sittenhän se on ihan normi koira, ainoa erotus että sille ei saa heittää mitään[ - -]Lapset kokee sen että se on. Ikävä sanoa, mulle se on apuväline. Ei saa, ei voi kiintyä periaatteessa[ - -]Pitää olla sellainen reilu suhde, kun tekee kovasti töitä niin pitäähän se palkita ja varmistaa sillä on muuten sitten hyvä.”

*people who do this (allow the dog to be on the couch) do not see this as an aid tool, it is more like a friend, a social thing. It breaks the idea a little bit, as this is an aid tool, an aid tool for movement. Pets you can get from the kennel. Society should not support that.”<sup>25</sup>*

The GDU1 saw guide dogs more as a family member and helpers, not mentioning it being an object or a tool. GDU1 had five different guide dogs already, and the recent one was GDU1's fifth dog. GDU2 saw the dog differently, this was GDU2's first guide dog. GDU2 wanted to differentiate it to be more an aid tool for movement. Considering the dog as more like pet or family member would diminish and devalue the dog's hard work. GDU2 mentioned that the relationship needs to be reciprocal, as the dog needs to be rewarded and also taken care of. This was because there was a lot of mutual trust involved, according to GDU2, GDU2 needed to trust GDU2's life on the guide dog and the guide dog needed to trust GDU2. Although, GDU2 mentioned that the dog cannot be seen as completely as an aid tool, a cold object, as it is an animal also (this is from another conversation that was not recorded). Thus, there is some ambivalence, a dog is an aid tool for movement but cannot completely be seen and treated as such.

Care families that I interviewed, thought of the care puppy as a part of their family. I was a little bit surprised of this as I thought that giving up the dog would be easier later on if the dog was not seen as a family member. But this was not the case as many care families expressed that it was actually training the dog for someone else that made the distinction. The guide dog care families were very committed to the guide dog puppy as some expressed that it will be sad when the puppy leaves but it is for a good purpose and they will be proud of the dog. The guide dog puppies have stricter rules that differ from some of the care families' other pets and dogs. The puppies cannot be on the sofa or sleep on their care family's bed or beds. The guide puppies have a stricter diet and they cannot be given treats from the dinner table. Many of the care families told me that their relationship with the guide dog puppy was actually a closer one when compared to their own dog.

CF4: *“It is more with me, with my own dog, we went out for walks but I would not have even thought to take my dog with me to work. Whereas, I take these to work with me all the time. There they learn that humans come and go and they need to be left unnoticed. And no playing around there[. . .]It could be that I am more attached to these. I do not mean that I did not have an attachment to my own dog. But with these it is much more intense, with these I am with all the time. For example, when I go to the food store[. . .]I*

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<sup>25</sup> GDU2: “K: Mietti tätä (viitataan opaskoiraan, nimi poistettu) ja omia koiria, onko omat koirat ollut läheisempiä? GDU2: On ne ehkä kun mietti, sellaista kiintymistä ollut enemmän. Ja sitten kun ne on ollut eri lailla, ne on ollut sängyssä ja sohvilla, onhan se ihan eri asia[- -]Ei se saa olla joo[- -]Siinä tekee hallaa siinä auktoriteetin suhteen[- -]Kun se tulee samaan asemaan kuin sinä.[- -]Useimmiten ketkä tekee näin ei näe tätä apuvälineenä vaan on sitten enempi sellainen kaveri, sosiaalinen juttu[- -]Se vaan rikkoo vähän sitä ajatusta, koska tämä on apuväline, liikkumisen apuväline. Et lemmikkejä voi sitten hakea kennelistä. Ei yhteiskunnan pitäisi semmoista lähteä rahoittamaan.”

*have a dog with me every time. It is a very rare occasion when I do not have a dog with me.*"<sup>26</sup>

As with the guide dog puppy they spent more time with practising and going to different places, even for food shopping as some grocery stores allowed the guide dog puppies in for training when puppies wore the training vest (see figure 1. and 2.). Care families were able to take the guide dog puppies almost everywhere they went, even to work (with a permission from the employer). One of the care families, CF1, that I followed up later in May 2017, told me that their guide dog puppy was selected to become a breeding dog thus they were able to keep the dog. Difference was that now that the dog was more like a normal dog, they were able to play with ball and other catch and throw games. One hindside was that the dog could not come anymore to the places where it went as a guide dog puppy trainee. For example, before they were able to go to the grocery store together when the dog had its training vest on, while now as a normal dog, grocery stores were off-limits. Bonus of this new changed status of becoming normal dog, not a guide dog puppy in-training anymore, was that both dogs (this care family had their own dog as a pet and then they had this guide dog puppy) could now be walked together. Before there was a need to walk these dogs separately as the guide dog puppy needed training during the walks.

With the prison dogs it was a similar case as with the care families. The trainer told me that the rules for those two working dogs were stricter than with his own dogs but these dogs were closer and, in some way, more important than perhaps his own dogs (pets). It was the time that he spent with these two working dogs, almost every hour during daytime and these working dogs came home with him. Training was done during free time so there was no strict separation between work and free time as the dogs were with him all the time. Whereas, the pet dogs usually are at home during the day or working hours and only the free time is spent with pet dogs. This indicates that when comparing with the pet dogs and these working dogs or puppies that are practicing to become working dogs, it is the time and spacial difference that separates these two. It indicates that with these guide dog puppies and the working dogs in prison, there is an active involvement, that could be described in Ingold's terms as 'being with' (as mentioned and described in chapter 2). With the working dogs, in the case of prison dogs and working guide dogs, it could also be in Haraway's terms 'becoming with' whereas, when looking at the training of the puppies, these are trained for someone else, in my mind the "becoming with" might not be as suitable.

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<sup>26</sup> CF4: "Enemmän kulkee mukana, kun taas oma koira, käytiin niin kuin lenkillä, mutta ei me muun muassa olisi tullut mieleen että otan sen mukaan duuniin. Kun nää taas on aina mukana töissä. Siellä ne sitten oppii sen, että ihmisiä tulee ja menee ja niitä ei huomioida. Ja siellä ei riehuta.[- -]Voi olla, että näihin kiintyy jopa enemmän. En yhtään väitä etteikö siihen omaan koiraan olisi kiintynyt, mutta se että näitten kanssa se toimiminen on paljon tiiviimpää, näitten kanssa ollaan lähes taukoamatta. Ihan kun mä lähdän vaikka ruokakauppaan[- -]niin mulla on aina koira mukana. Hyvin harvoja tilanteita ettei mulla olisi koira mukana."

### 3.3 Reflections

I was wondering most often during my field that what makes an ideal guide dog or a puppy. What makes an ideal trainer or a dog person or guide dog user? Regarding the guide dogs or the puppies, I was often told that there are no ideal guide dogs as there were no ideal guide dog users same applied to the puppies. People that use and work with dogs vary in their physical fitness, everyday life schedule as some are working and some are not, desires and hobbies differ as well, even the places where the people live differ, some live on the countryside where as others in busy city life. I was told that one guide user was known for walking more than 10 kilometres easily per day where as some users did only short walks. There are users who live in the countryside and users who live in bustling cities and travel and go different places a lot. Thus, there is a need for dogs with different characteristics and activity levels as there are humans with different variations. For example, in the Guide dog year book 2018, there is text about Mr. Viitanen who has had five different guide dogs throughout his life. Now in his older days he is quite happy to have a relatively calm guide dog, unlike the active dogs that he preferred when he was younger and liked to go for long walks. He comments that, both active and lively, and then again, calm dogs are good guides as long as they can focus and have a good nerve structure<sup>27</sup> (Karjalainen 2018: 17). Of course, there were certain characteristics that all guide dogs need, such as focus, calmness, braveness, and the desire to perform work. Depending on the type of the work that the dog does, the work defines the basic characteristics (for example the desire to work and guide) that the dog needs to have for the person the dog will guide through its working life. The trainers at the Guide Dog School try to match the trained guide dogs to the right persons. They consider the dog's characteristics, how active the dog is, its nature and other things when looking for a suitable guide dog user for it. In my interview with the senior trainers it was clear that they would not a couple very active dog to an older guide dog user that is not very active any more. I will continue this discussion more in the chapter 4.

For people who work with dogs or train them, good characteristics are, understanding and reading the dog. Sanders' (2006: 156) article also mentions that it is only a split-second when dog needs to be rewarded for correct behaviour or corrected for bad behaviour. I observed the same in the puppy training sessions, care families had to be very fast when rewarding the puppy, most often the moment already had passed by. I even sometimes wonder the same with my dog, that does my dog associate the reward for this behaviour (that I want) or with some other behaviour (that I did not mean to reward) because I just rewarded my dog too late. I think owning a dog helped me to understand and process the difficulties and different areas that there might be involved with working dogs. Many times, after the puppy training session, I thought about what the good qualities for guide dogs are and what of those qualities my dog is lacking or actually has.

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<sup>27</sup> Good nerve structure means that the dog is able to withstand different situations, surfaces, heights, people etc. calmly and without stressing as the trainers explained to me during fieldwork or in the interviews.

Owning a dog makes me an insider as well, a dog person, that does not question nor wonder at everything but might also give me more insight as described above.

In the next chapter, I will write more about the training period, the working life of the guide dogs and lastly, I will discuss more about my third research question, especially with the focus on the aid tool perspective. In this chapter I have started to answer my first question relating on what type of work these dogs do. In my examples, the work has been guiding people, searching for drug substances and guns. In this chapter, I have also partially answered to my third question, is the dog perceived as a family member. In the case of care families and guide dog users that I interviewed, the guide dog puppy or the guide dog is seen as a family member, but also as an aid tool.

## 4. Dogs in training and their working life

One of the guide dog users, GDU2, told me about an argument GDU2 had heard. This argument was about the GDU2's guide dog and the problem of its status. The guide dog had this new harness where the guide bar was easily taken off, thus only the harness was being left on, harness that still indicates that the dog is a guide dog. GDU2 had taken the guide bar off and released the guide dog for a pee break.

GDU2: *"We have sometimes freed this dog so that this has been there (showing the dog's harness). And people were wondering if it is still working. They started to fight, this couple, is it working or is it free. Huge debate, is it free, is it working, it is free, it is working."*<sup>28</sup>

In this chapter, I will discuss on training the guide dogs and write about their working life. This chapter has formed in my head with asking these questions; What is work like for the guide dogs? Can work and free time be separated or can there be seen difference between them? Can the dog's work be replaced by other human or even a robot in the future? What is the value of the guide dog's work to its user? How is the guide dog seen, is it an aid tool or something else? I will show in this chapter with descriptions of the training the guide dogs and during their work, that there is an active engagement in the human–animal relationship. Best to describe this could be the Ingold's idea of 'being with' (2000) and Haraway's 'becoming with' (2008) as I will show that a dog's perspective is needed to train the dogs. The guide dogs cannot be trained or seen only in human terms and expectations; dog's point of view is crucial for the training process. The guide dogs go through an extensive training, started from the puppy days, and when finishing this

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<sup>28</sup> GDU2: "Me ollaan joskus juoksutettu vapaana, että nää on ollut siellä (osoittaa koiran valjaisiin). Ja siellä ihmiset pohtivatkin, että onko se nyt töissä. Ne sai riidankin siitä, semmoinen pariskunta, että onko se töissä vai vapaalla. Hirveä väittely, onko se vapaalla, onko se töissä, vapaalla, töissä."



training, the mutual education still continues. The guide dog is not a finished product nor a robot that is completely ready when it starts its working life. The guide dog and its users continuously and mutually shape, and teach each other.

## 4.1 Dogs in training

The adolescent (guide dogs to be) that make it to the next phase of training, face training that is around 20 weeks long. There might be holiday pauses during the training, thus the 20 weeks only adds up when there has been 20 weeks of worth of training days. In between of the training, the dogs will spend those holidays and weekends at the care families' place when possible, and at the beginning of the week return back to the Guide Dog School. Training involves more specified lessons with the guide dog harness, walking while wearing the harness and trainers using the harness's handlebar to hold the dog, as would a visually impaired person do. During walks, the trainers or at later phase the dog, would be stopping in front of pedestrian crossings and crossroads, doors, stairwells, elevators and shops. At the beginning the trainer might help out the dog more but as the training advances more and more is expected from the dog. The dog has to offer solutions by itself, not because of the trainer's commands or orders. The dog has to start to think and see the world by itself, connect the previous training and orders. To show this type of learning the dog needs to start offer automatically certain behaviours. The guide dogs thus need to decide things by themselves but not completely. They need to understand and follow their trainer's or later on the guide dog user's orders but figure out if the situation is dangerous, they need to resist their trainer's or user's commands. For example, the trainer or the user always gives a command to cross a road, the dog cannot ever decide by itself to cross it without human orders. When the human gives an order to cross the road and the dog sees that it is dangerous i.e. a car is coming towards them, the dog has to, in a way, disobey the human's orders or show resistance. In this way the trainer, or later, the user will know that crossing the road is not possible at that moment. This means that the guide dogs cannot be trained as mindless robots that follow the human orders no matter what, instead they need to understand which orders they can follow straight away or which they can accomplish only half way and then wait for further instructions. The trainers describe this as follows:

*T1: "Person decides, gives order 'let's go' but if there is a car coming then the dog will not obey or it even reverses the direction, out of the way from the car's path.[. . .] Sometimes user might be mistaken, might think that the location is on the left, but it is on the right."*<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> T1: "Henkilö päättää, antaa käskyn yli mars, mutta jos sieltä tulee auto, niin se koira ei tottele sitä taikka se jopa peruuttaa alta pois. [-]käyttäjä saattaa erehtyä, luulee vaan, että se kohde on vasemmalla, mutta se onkin oikealla."

T2: “[. . .]this it is called as intelligent disobedience. Q: The dog cannot be completely under command? So when you cross over then you need to cross over? T2: When the command has been given to the dog, then the responsibility transfers to the dog.”<sup>30</sup>

T1: “While training the dog, we try give and teach that independence. For example, if I have been with that dog in Tikkurila, in a book store, and then today we will walk past it and without giving any orders, the dog would make me notice the book store’s door, then I will praise and reward the dog. Then I think, that is great, the dog thought of it by itself and gave an independent solution.”<sup>31</sup>

The relationship between the trainer and the dog was not described as being a family member, their own dogs at home were that. But these dogs in training lived in the school’s kennels during the week. The relationship was more towards co-workers, dog co-worker, it was described and felt with warm feelings. The relationship could not be treated as a human-object relationship or training the dog as same as for some tool to be upgraded. In this conversation the dog’s perspective was mentioned and how troubled dogs are formed:

T2: “[. . .]what could the terms be, some sort of co-worker, a dog workmate. There needs to be a certain kind of a relationship...I think it needs to be warm and you need to start thinking like a dog animal, my thoughts. You cannot be cold, just take it from the kennel, train and that is it. Q: How do you think like a dog? T2: You need to start thinking about the behaviour of the dog, how is the dog animal thinking. It thinks like a dog animal, not like a human. That is the issues with problem dogs, humans always think like humans, for example, human is thinking; it is wonderful to have a dog, and go for a walk with it, very nice. But when you receive a dog and it does not go as planned. Then the human starts to push their own thoughts, this is not nice, the dog is not nice, it barks to everyone, it is difficult to go for a walk with it, it is hard to be social with it. When the person starts to change their line of thought and thinks why is this dog doing this, then we can start finding answers.”<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> T2: “[ - ]sitä kutsutaan kuin sellainen älykäs tottelemattomuus. K: Koira ei saa olla täysin käskyttävissä? Että nyt meet yli ja sitten se menee? T2: Käsky annettu koiralle ja vastuu silloin siirtyi koiralle.”

<sup>31</sup> T1: “Koulutusaikana pyritään kasvattaman koiralle tota itsenäisyyttäkin. Eliikkä mä teen sillä tavalla, että jos mä olen vaikka tuon koiran kanssa käynyt Tikkurilan Suomalaisessa Kirjakaupassa ja sitten mä tänään kävelen siitä ohi ja ilman mitään käskyä toi koira yhtäkkiä ilmaisee mulle sen kirjakaupan oven niin mä kehu ja palkitsen, että hyvä sä ajattelit itse ja teit itsenäisesti ratkaisun.”

<sup>32</sup> T2: “[ - ]mitäköhän ne termit voisi olla, jonkinnäköinen työkaveri, koira työkaveri. Siihen pitää olla sellainen tietyntyylinen suhde...Ja siinä pitää olla sellaista lämmenhenkisyyttä olla mukana. Ja itse pitää ruveta ajattelemaan silleen koira-eläimen tavoilla, mun ajatusmaailma. Ettei ole vain sellainen kylmä, joka ottaa vaan sen tuolta tarhasta, treenaa ja se on sitten siinä. K: Miten ajattelee koiran tavoin tai koiran kautta? T2: Pitää ruveta ajattelemaan koiran käyttäytymistä, miten se koira eläin ajattelee, se ajattelee koira-eläimen tavoin eikä ihmismäisesti. Se on ainakin ongelmakoirissa se juttu, että ihminen ajattelee ihmismäisesti, esimerkiksi sen, että se ajattelee, että mielessään, ihana ottaa koira ja lähtee sen kanssa lenkkeileen ja tosi kivaa. Sitten kun se saa sen koiran niin se ei menekkään niin kuin strömssössä. Sit se vaan puskee sitä omaa ajatusmaailmaa, että tää ei oo kivaa ja tällöinen koira ja tän kanssa on hankala liikkua ja tää koira ei ymmärrä, räyhää kaikille toisille koirille. Vaikea olla sosiaalinen tällöisen koiran kanssa. Sitten jos ihminen rupeaa muuttamaan sitä ajatusmaailmaa ja miettimään, että miksi se koira tekee noin niin voidaan ruveta löytämään vastauksia.”

I observed two different senior trainers on two different days, for the whole work day in both cases. One of the trainers had trained those dogs little bit longer, just about a month. Little bit more was to be expected from the dogs, for example, in a shopping centre, different locations were asked from the dog, to show a bench, to show an elevator button and so on. The training was quite brief as the dog got tired quite easily. According to the trainer it was better to stop before the dog got too tired, as it would get a successful experience from the training, too tired it might have negative associations. In both cases, both trainers had two dogs with them, one was waiting at the car, while the other trained. In the afternoon, after lunch, one or two different dogs would be trained then. Thus, the trainer might train four different dogs during the one working day. With other trainer as well, we went to different shopping centre, just standing there to see how the dog reacts to different smells, noises and people walking by. Walking was carried out regularly with both of the trainers. Both trainers observed the dog's behaviour and pointed to me different indicators of the dog's feelings. For example, if the tail would be nice and relaxed, the dog would be in a good and relaxed mood, whereas tail being stiffly at full length extended behind the body would mean that the dog experiences stress. Other trainer's dogs had been with the trainer only for couple of weeks thus the trainer was still estimating the dogs. If those dogs would be suitable for training. The trainer mentioned that it is visible from the dogs quite quickly if the dogs are suitable at all. The trainer would not waste too much time on training dogs that were not ready to trained. I found out through my interviews with the Guide Dog School staff that around 70% of dogs will pass and become as guide dogs. Before this number was nearer 50%, the increase in the pass percentage might be due to the active puppy program but it had been in place only for a couple of years thus it was too early to see the final end results. Object of the training is not to force the dog; a dog needs to have its own agency and wants and if these collide with guiding it is a bonus. Two different trainers that interviewed explained this to me:

*T1: "Working is made self-rewarding, for example if the dog finds a door, door is opened and we go inside. If the dog locates a pedestrian crossing, and I say 'let's go', continue our walk to that direction, it serves as a reward for the dog."*<sup>33</sup>

*T2: "Our goal is that everyone enjoys it, that they enjoy working"*<sup>34</sup>

*T1: "Or if can't make it enjoyable, then we need to think, that should we train this dog to become as a guide dog. If the dog already thinks that this is a wrong profession, it cannot be. T2: or walking is boring, T1: or if you show the guide dog's harness and the dog runs away then you should not train that dog as a guide dog. The dog, by itself, needs to consider that this is a good choice to become as a guide dog."*<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> T1: "Työskentelystä yritetään tehdä itse itseään palkkaavaa, eli jos koira hakee oven, ovi aukeaa ja mennään sisään, jos hakee suojatien ja sanotaan yli mars, jatketaan lenkkiä siihen suuntaan, se toimii niin kuin palkkana."

<sup>34</sup> T2: "tavoite on kaikilla, että se tekeminen on mukavaa, että työskentely on mukavaa."

<sup>35</sup> T1: "Sitten jos sitä ei saada mukavaksi, niin sitten me mietitään, että kannattaako tätä kyseistä koiraa edes kouluttaa opaskoiraksi. Ei semmoinen, että jos se koira on alun perin sitä mieltä, että tää on tosi huono ammatinvalinta, T2: että kävely on tylsää, T1: tai näytät opaskoiravaljaita ja koira lähtee karkuun niin tuskin sellaista kannattaa opaskoiraksi kouluttaa, että koiran täytyy olla sitä mieltä, että tämä on hyvä idea niin kuin valmistua opaskoiraksi."

Trainers described that they select dogs that match their future users, that energy levels and expectations are similar for both. They told me during the interview that normal people who look for hobby dog, or perhaps pet dog, they usually select the dog. This could mean that they might actually choose the wrong individual and even the breed is completely wrong, when considering the human and the individual dog's energy levels. Whereas, with a guide dog they can see that both, the human and the dog have same direction and they will just then choose which individual dog matches with certain individual human. One of the guide dog users described the process more of date profile matching.

*T2: "...We always try to find a certain dog for its users so that these two would just click. If the dog is too energetic both get frustrated, and if the dog is too lazy, well the human is more annoyed than the dog, as the dog does not fulfil all the wishes of its user. Luckily, we can see that both of them would have the same direction. They want a guide dog and we want to make that guide dog. It can be also that there are different people and different dogs with different energy levels and the energy level alone is not the factor, there others as well, such as the surrounding environment."*<sup>36</sup>

*GDU2: "When you apply for a dog and the hospital has accepted your application, there is a pre-course. Nowadays it is held very often. That is couple days long, you can try a dog there and they also do a profile of you and then they will do this so-called Tinder matching. They will look who will fit with whom. With this process they experienced, straight away they will see that this dog. Very rarely they are mistaken."*<sup>37</sup>

When a dog has been selected, together with the dog, trainer and user, complete two weeks settling in "course" in Helsinki, at the Iiris Centre. After two weeks of adjusting, the guide dog and the user go to the user's home. If there are any problems, dog trainers from the Guide Dog School can make house visits to see if they can help with the training or with other issues. Trainers help with the most commonly used routes. Later on, there are volunteers that can help to train new walking routes. I was curious that how it feels to train dogs for someone else. One of the trainers mentioned that because it is for someone else, the trainers cannot use their own methods, as they are not training their own dog. At the beginning, the trainer was attached to the dogs more, but then a new dog would come along and need training. Another trainer described the situation when a dog is given to its user:

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<sup>36</sup> T2: "...Sitten pyritään aina katsomaan aina semmoinen koira sille käyttäjälle, että se olisi niin kuin, natsaisi nämä kummatkin. Koska jos se on liian energinen koira, kumpikin turhautuu siitä ja sitten taas jos se on liian laiska koira, niin se ihminen enemmän turhautuu, kun ei täyty nyt ne toiveet...Me pystytään onneksi sitä vähän katsomaan, että niillä on sama päämäärä. Ne haluaa opaskoiran ja me halutaan tehdä se opaskoira. Ja sitten voi olla, että on eri energia tasolla olevia ihmisiä ja koiria ja se ei ole pelkkä se energia taso vaan muutenkin, liikkumisympäristö."

<sup>37</sup> GDU2: "Kun hakee koira, sitten kun sairaanhoitopiiri on hyväksynyt hakemuksen, sitten esikurssi, nykyisinhän niitä on hirveän useasti. Siihen, se on pari päiväinen et siellä pääsee kokeileen koira ja siellä ne tekee susta profiilin ja sitten ne tekee niin sanotusti Tinderi matchauksen. Ne kattoo ketkä sopii. Ja siinä ne on kyllä, niin suvereenieja, että ne näkee heti, että tää koira. Että siinä tulee aika harvoin virheitä."

T2: *“Q: What challenges exist when you train a dog for someone else? T2: At least that, when I give the dog to someone else and we start walking, the dog is confused of the situation, “Hey, why are you not moving?”. That is the first thing that is visible. Then it is up to the dog to take the responsibility of the situation.”*<sup>38</sup>

One of the trainers, in the interview, mentioned that as the dog works for humans, in the case of the guide dogs, guiding to humans to places, it is fair that the dog then receives food, shelter and is taken care of. This reminds me of the idea of a social contract, that I introduced in the chapter 2. One could see the relation between a guide dog and then the vision impaired person as a form of contract. For me, I cannot see this as that, as a mutual contract between the guide dog and human. As a guide dog performs acts of guiding, it is not aware of human society's rules and norms. For us humans it could be easier to relate to the function of a guide dog, via framing it to our understanding, framing it to be similar as human work in a society guided with rules and norms, as Goffman's theory of frame analyses indicates (1986: 13).

## 4.2 Dogs at work

I tried to define what work means for the dogs or how humans see it. This was not an easy task and answers varied depending on who I was discussing it with. One of the trainers that I spend a day with mentioned to me that dogs cannot work, as they do not belong to any trade-unions. Dogs, in the case of the guide dogs, help people to move from A location to the B location. Thus, in this case dogs perform certain functions. This similar idea was presented by some of the care families, as one mentioned that all dogs have work, work can be seen as just keeping company for the humans. Sitting on and warming grandmother's lap and being there as and functioning as a kind of therapy animal. This care family had different scale for the functions that they regarded as work. For example, according to this care family, one function could just be there and keep company, whereas at the other extreme end, was the failure to function, in this case for a bomb dog to fail in its task. This failure might seriously affect and endanger human lives. Some of my interviewees clearly stated that some of the dogs do work, while others do not. This idea was based on categories that some dogs were for hobby purposes such as going to dog shows or competing in agility tournaments, for example. Other dogs just are, such as pets, and these were the kinds of dogs that did not have any work. Whereas some dogs were for; hunting purposes, aid purposes such as aid dogs and guide dogs and other dogs worked in more official capacity for the government, such as police, army, customs dogs. There was a difference on how people saw work. It could be either related to the functions that the dog was doing or to

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<sup>38</sup> T2: “K: Mitä haasteita on kun kouluttaa toiselle henkilölle koiraa? T2: Ainakin se, että kun mä annan sen koiran toiselle ja lähdetään yhdessä käveleen niin se koira on niin hämillään tilanteesta, hei mikset sä liiku. Se on ainakin ensimmäinen mikä selkeästi näkyy. Ja sitten koiran pitää ottaa vastuu siitä.”

the status of the owner and what they were using the dog for. The former idea could indicate that the idea of work is based on the human and animal's relationship whereas the latter could be seen as more of the idea that dog is viewed more as an object, as it serves a certain function. This thinking was not a problem for my interviewees as even the idea of dogs working was difficult. I guess even in the human world work can be seen differently by different people. For example, a homeless person can be seen as without any work and some might see that the homeless persons work or function could be to beg money from strangers.

One of my questions in my interviews was that can a dog's user or trainer differentiate when the dog is working and when it is on its free time. Most of my interviewees said that it is quite clear when the dog is at work. Some of my interviewees, from care families, were not able to make difference between work or free time but that was because of the age of the dog, they were still quite small puppies. One indication of work with guide dog puppies is the puppy's vest (figure 1. and 2.). While wearing the vest, most stores let guide dog puppies inside a store for a training purpose. Vest also indicates for the public that dog is practicing work and it should not be disturbed. Of course, for working guide dogs they are wearing a guide dog harness and it is easier to see that they might be working. In my current workplace during spring 2019 I heard two of my co-workers discussing whether they thought that the dog they had seen was free. I came to the conversation in the middle, I learned that they had seen a lonely dog, a guide dog still wearing its harness but no guide dog user was present. My co-workers were thinking if the dog was still working but could the dog work without its user. Then the other argued that it still had its harness on, thus this indicates a working behaviour. The conclusion of the conversation was that the dog was on its break as they did not see the user even though dog's harness was still present. It was really interesting to notice that this type of observation raises arguments or discussion (as one of the guide dog users mentioned at the beginning of this chapter). It seems to be clear that the harness is quite well-known symbol and it indicates the dog's working status but then dog's behaviour will also impact on the observation if the dog is working or not.

Care families that had an older puppy described the change in the puppy's behaviour while wearing the vest. Many described the puppy as a different puppy. The puppy, with vest on, became more focused and almost excited with certain tension, ready to work. Another care family mentioned that the training vest for them was almost sacred, the vest was only worn when they would in a calm place or while walking calmly. One of the guide dog users said that at home the guide dog does not exist at all, meaning that most often, the dog was relaxing and sleeping quietly in its designated place. Occasionally it would come to check the user by touching user's hand. This is also what I observed while doing the interview at one of the guide dog user's home. The dog was almost invisible, only couple times the dog came to check the user. The guide dog user mentioned that the dog came more often to check as I was there, a stranger. Another guide dog user mentioned that at home the dog was as any other dog, it was playful with one exception, no ball games were allowed and maybe the dog slept more. During work while guiding, outside the home, the guide dog was more focused. This was very clear as I observed a walking route in a

busy centre, one afternoon. The guide dog user gave the guide dog a command, a place where the guide dog users wanted to visit. The guide dog started to advance forward with a steady and assured pace. Occasionally the guide dog glanced at me, this was felt by the guide dog user and asked me if the guide dog acted so. This was because again, I was a stranger, suddenly walking near and talking to the guide dog user. Soon the guide dog became accustomed to me and the walk continued without any problems. We went through couple of escalators without any problems and suddenly the guide dog stopped and the asked location was in front of us.

Similar behaviour as described above was with more grown up guide dog's puppies. One of the care families told me that at outside the home's door dog is working, one can see it from the dog's behaviour and at home dog relaxes and sleeps, and the dog is almost invisible. GDU2 mentioned that mainly the guide dog works outside the home, all the time. In my other ethnographic example, with the prison dogs, the dog trainer mentioned, that those two dogs were always ready to work, even without any commands, occasionally while walking with the dogs, dogs would detect a scent of drug substances and would start to work without any orders. In the case of the guide dogs started to work once the harness was put on.



Figure 4. Guide dog trainees in alert mode. This could be an example of working-mode.





Figure 5. Guide dog trainees running free without the guide harness. This could be an example of free-mode.

When thinking about the dog's work's purpose and end results, for drug and gun dogs in my minor observation and in Sanders' K-9 dogs their work's purpose and end result was to find out drugs and for K-9 police dogs to slow down escaping or resisting suspects. For guide dogs, the purpose is to help the users to move from place A to place B or C and the end result is to give their users freedom. Sanders also did make a study of guide dogs and how those dogs impacted on the identity of persons with visual impairments (2000). In his study many visually impaired persons emphasised that the guide dogs allowed them to move more freely and to places they probably would not go with a white stick. The white stick seemed for many visually impaired as negative or stigmatising (ibid: 134). In Sanders's article the vision impaired with a dog became whole, a human-dog unit working together, the dog being their eyes (ibid: 136). In one of my interviews I asked about difference between the guide dog and the white stick:

*GDU2: "How does the dog help you move? How could I put it, if at the beginning I was able to walk one kilometre with the stick and now we walk 10-15 kilometres per day, well there is a difference.[. . .]And you need to go[. . .]Firstly, you need to go because the dog has needs and then you yourself want to keep fit. It becomes a combination that you will just go. It has become a lifestyle."*<sup>39</sup>

<sup>39</sup> GDU2: "K: Miten koira helpottaa liikkumista? Mitenhän sen sanoisi, jos silloin alkuunsa kepin kanssa pystyi kilometrin kävelemään ja nyt me vedetään 10-15 kilometriä päivässä, niin kyllähän siinä aika ero on. [- -]Ja siinä on se, että tulee lähdettyä[- -]Ensinnäkin on pakko mennä, kun koiralla on tarpeita ja sitten kun itse haluaa pysyä kunnossa, niin siinä tulee semmoinen yhtälö, tulee vaan sitten mentyä. Siitä on tullut elämäntapa."



GDU2: *"I remember the first time when I learned to walk to a certain location (locations removed) with the stick, it was not easy, but I did it. It took me maybe couple of hours. When I got this (dog's name removed), it took 20 minutes. We flew there, piiiuh. It is so freeing that no one will ever give up on that."*<sup>40</sup>

GDU2: *"It has an interesting social meaning as well, if you think, going with the white stick to a metro, no one in there will ask what brand is your white stick. Now many times people come to me and ask is it a Labrador. It has a very big meaning."*<sup>41</sup>

The other guide dog user, GDU1, mentioned that without the guide dog, GDU1 would need to re-learn all the routes with the white stick. GDU1 would not be as confident in leaving the house as it would be with a guide dog. In my interview with the guide dog users, the emphasis was on the concept of freedom, which is what the guide dog gives through its work, freedom to go whenever and wherever with the dog. The guide dogs also provided sociality, people would approach more freely and new friends and acquaintances were made through the guide dog field (more on this in the chapter 5). When asked if human could replace the guide dog, the answer was no for GDU1. GDU1 could not get anyone to go out with GDU1 multiple times of day or the times wanted. Without a dog there would be limitations, limitations that one would put on oneself, a larger threshold to go out. GDU1 said that the dog was also good company, many times during the day GDU1 talked to the dog and it was good company throughout life. Of course a dog could not completely replace people as well, as there are some functions where people are needed and dog cannot do those, according to GDU1. GDU2 thought about the idea of human replacing the guide dog, conclusion was that it would be very expensive as the aid persons would need to be available 24/7. GDU2 mentioned that GDU2 does not use the white stick anymore, or only in very rare cases, in cases where GDU2 cannot for some reason to take the guide dog with him. GDU2 mentioned that there is more courage to go to places with the dog, with the stick GDU2 probably would not even think to go. One of the care families also told me when I asked what the dog in general gives to humans, they answered that basic or normal dog give companionship. Especially if you live alone this is more emphasised then for example for people who have family or children. For the guide dog users, it is mainly and mostly the freedom of the movement:

GDU2: *"Q: Will you take another dog after this (name removed)? GDU2: Of course, as long as I am alive and breathing and if I will still get one, I will never give up on that. The freedom of movement, one cannot describe that."*<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> GDU2: "Mä muistan ekan kerran opetellut kepillä tiettyyn sijaintiin (sijainnit poistettu), se ei ollut mikään helppo homma, se onnistui, mutta mulla meni siihen ehkä pari tuntia. Kun mä sain tän koiran (nimi poistettu), se oli 20 minsaa. Me lennettiin sinne, piiiuh. Se on niin vapauttavaa, ei kukaan luovu siitä."

<sup>41</sup> GDU2: "Ja sillä on sellainen jännä sosiaalinen merkitys, jos ajattelee valkoisen kepin kanssa menee metroon, niin ei kyllä kukaan tullut kysyyn, että minkäs merkinen toi sun valkoinen keppi on. Nyt tulee tosi useasti ihmiset juttelemaan, että onko se labbis. Sillä on kyllä tosi iso merkitys."

<sup>42</sup> GDU2: "K: Aiotko ottaa tämän (nimi poistettu) jälkeen toisen koiran? GDU2: Totta kai, niin kauan kun henki pihisee ja saan koiran niin en ikinä luovu. Siis se liikkumisen vapaus, sitä ei voi kuvailla."

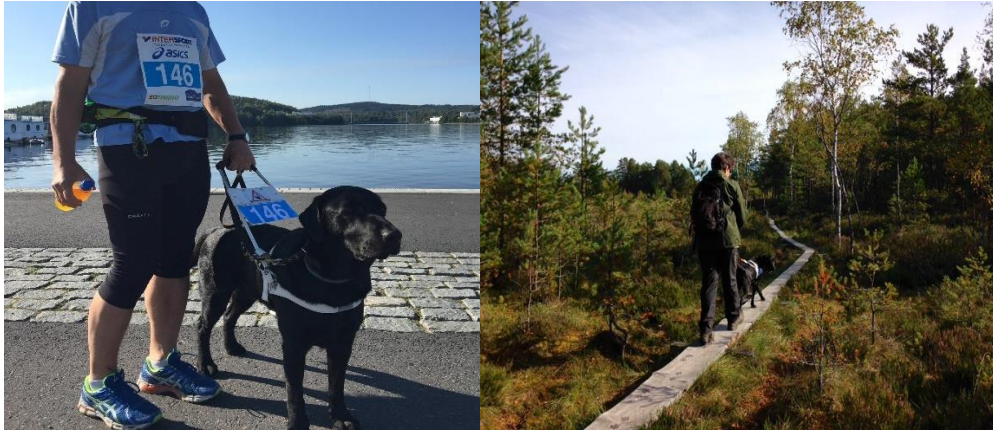


Figure 6. A guide dogs give freedom of movement to their users. On the left picture a guide dog user is in a running competition whereas on the right picture a guide dog user is walking on a narrow wood-planked path in a marsh area.

### 4.3 Guide dog = aid tool?

*“It is important that in the beginning of the training we receive enough information from our aid tool that we can build a lasting friendship and take it as part of our family”<sup>43</sup>*

This quote (Karjalainen 2017: 2) is from a guide dog user and the editor of the Guide Dog publication. In this short article she is writing about the importance of sharing information as the guide dogs were raised in a different home. According to the article it would be helpful if care families kept in contact with the guide dog users in order for them to learn about their guide dogs. The quote mentions the guide dogs as aid tools but also as a future member of the family and something that is capable of forming a friendship with. Similarly, one of the care families (CF3) described her thoughts on the guide dog, explaining that a guide dog is much more than an aid tool, it can perform similar functions but it cannot be referred to as such. CF3 also mentions that the guide dogs are probably more important to the vision impaired person when compared to a person with a pet dog.

*CF3: “I think the guide dog is a lot, it can be quite major factor for the human in many different fields of life, psychologically as you are not alone, and you can move so there is that movement factor, company and everything. Maybe quite a lot and also those people who work, it is an aid tool even though dog cannot be called as an aid tool. But it enables movement. Those dogs are more than dogs are of us. These dogs become life partners and everything is sort of shared together.”<sup>44</sup>*

<sup>43</sup> Original quote in Finnish: “Siksi on tärkeää, että me koulutuksen alkuvaiheessa saamme riittävästi tietoa apuvälineestämme, jotta voimme rakentaa sen kanssa tiiviin ystävyssuhteen ja ottaa sen osaksi perhettä”

<sup>44</sup> CF3: “Mun mielestä opaskoira on aika paljon, että se voi sille ihmiselle olla niin suuri niin kuin monessa osa-alueessa se tekijä monessa, niin psyykkisesti että se ei ole niin kuin yksin, ja pääsee liikkumaan, on se joo liikkumispuoli, seura ja kaikki. Että aika paljon varmasti ja sitten osittain myös ne ihmiset, jotka käy töissä, on apuvälinekin vaikka koiraa ei voi apuvälineeksi sanoa. Mutta mahdollistaa sen liikkumisen. Enemmänhän se on mitä koirat on meille. Niistä tulee elämäkumppaneita, kaikki jaetaan tietyllä tavalla yhdessä.”

One of the care families (CF4) that I interviewed told me a comparison could be made to having a guide to it could be compared to having new glasses. This is what she had thought while I was asking what the different guide dog users have told CF4 about receiving guide dogs, as CF4 had raised quite a few guide dog puppies:

CF4: *"When a thought about a person who needs glasses, that person does not brag when receiving new glasses that I can see. But if someone receives glasses for the first time they might realise that wow I can read with these. Then one can feel how much easier life is when one has had glasses"*<sup>45</sup>

Often one might think that the guide dogs that complete their training are the finished article but this is not the case:

GDU2: *"One thinks that these come from a certain mould, that these robots and they will do everything. But it is not like that, you need to teach them a lot. They complete a sort of vocational school and after that we will see how it goes."*<sup>46</sup>

Both of the guide dog users emphasised that it takes time to get to know and build up a relationship with the dog, while guiding and also at home. GDU2 mentioned that it might take as long as one year to get the working relationship. GDU1 told me that if someone implies that everything has been perfect with the guide dog from the beginning, then that person is not being completely honest. Both of the users mentioned that sometimes people when applying for a guide dog do not realise the process that is involved. If receiving dogs is made too easy, then some will also give up the guide dog easily, as one year is a long time to get the working relationship in order. Both GDU1 and GDU2 described that it is quite common with a good guide to have some trouble in the beginning. The guide dog might start guiding wrong or guiding towards humans, resulting in collision with another person. GDU2 had a lot of difficulties with the guide dog, when they first started. In the beginning everything was going well but after a few months, the dog started to lead wrong, it could not differentiate between left or right. Luckily the guide dog user had a lot of patience and together with the dog they were able to make it work. Now, according to GDU2, the guide dog is one of the best dogs that there is. GDU1 was describing something similar with GDU1's guide dogs.

In an earlier chapter I mentioned Arluke & Sanders' writing regarding animals as tools. Animals are transformed into tools by process of deanthropomorphising (1996: 173). Do guide dogs belong to this process, I wonder. I would argue that they do not. This is because of treatment

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<sup>45</sup> CF4: "Että vähän kuin ajatellaan joku, joka saa sen avun silmälaseista niin ei se hehkuta sitä, että kun se saa uudet silmälasit, että vau, että mä näen hyvin niillä. Mutta jos ensimmäiset silmälasit saa ja sitten oivaltaa, että hei mähän pystynkin lukemaan. Niin voi tuntua miten paljon helpompaa elämä on kun on saanut ne silmälasit."

<sup>46</sup> GDU2: "Sitä kuvittelee, että nämä tulee jostain muotista, on robotteja, että ne tekee kaiken, mutta ei se oikeasti olekaan, että itse joutuu opettaa aika paljon siinä. Ne käy vähän niin kuin ammattikoulun ja sen jälkeen katsotaan että miten homma menee."

and respect that the guide dogs have. It is also that with their work, these guide dogs are active agents. Together with the human, a guide dog learns to do the work as same way human learns to work with the guide dogs. Guide dogs are also considered and referred to as a family member, a companion. The guide dogs each have an individual name, not that of a number or other meaningless name, which would be used in the process of making tools (ibid). The guide dog puppy names are selected based on it being ideally two syllable names, or in some cases one syllable is sufficient. The name should not be a person's name, as they do not know who will receive the guide dog. It could be awkward if the guide dog and the guide dog user would share the same name. Person's nicknames were quite common as well. One puppy litter is named after a one alphabet letter, thus the litter, a real-life example, U-litter of six puppies are named as: Uho, Uke, Ukko, Uno, Uppis and Uma (Opaskoirakoulu, e). The alphabet is used in a descending order, thus the next litter after U, would be the V-litter, note that not all the alphabets are used as in the Finnish language it can be difficult to find names with certain letters. If a puppy becomes a guide dog, then the name of the puppy's would be registered and this name would be reserved for this certain guide dog. The use of the name would be released for re-use only after the guide dog has passed away. If the puppy does not become as a guide dog, then the name could be re-used sooner. This all indicates that these guide dogs are individuals with individual names, not tools with unspecific names.

It is interesting that in the website of the Finnish Federation of the Visually Impaired (Näkövammaisten liitto ry) the guide dogs are under the section entitled "movement" (*liikkuminen*), not under the section entitled "aid tools" (*apuvälineet*). The white stick, however, is not listed under "aid tools" but under "movement" as well<sup>47</sup>. These guide dogs are considered as aid tools but according to Saavalainen the Finnish legislation does not actually define what is an aid tool and how it is used. Hospital districts define and distribute the aid tools (Saavalainen, 2020). According the guide dogs' users as guide dogs are seen as aid tools there are some regulations that the hospitals need to follow. Before, the waiting time for a guide dog was lengthy, one might wait even three years or longer for a trained guide dog, especially when an individual dog is matched to an individual user, then not just any available dog will do. Nowadays the maximum wait is 6 months long as this is the maximum time for a wait to receive any aid tool. This has opened the field of training the guide dogs into a competition. As now there are couple of other companies that are training guide dogs as well (as mentioned in chapter 1). GDU2 was concerned that this might change how the people view the guide dogs. The worry was that as it will be faster and easier to get guide dogs; this might put pressure on the training of the dogs and the quality might suffer as well. People might start to view and treat guide dogs more as an object as they would become more accessible to the vision impaired. During my fieldwork this was a concern that some others shared as well, but while I was there, those worries were left unfounded. This was because the change in the wait-time and the new regulation was quite recent, this change had occurred around one year before I was in the field. Change from multiple years of waiting

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<sup>47</sup> I noticed that this is only in the Finnish version of the website, from the English language version description of "aid tools" and "movement" are missing.

reduced to six months, thus nobody was able to predict the future, they were only able to speculate.

By enforcing the idea of the guide dog as an aid tool makes it more valued, by law it has certain special rights, as the guide dog user is allowed to go almost everywhere with the guide dog (there are some exceptions, e.g. a professional kitchen in a restaurant) it also differentiates the guide dog from a pet. A pet according to Ingold, pertains some of the human characters, being almost human but is never allowed to grow up (2000: 91), whereas, the guide dog then actually grows up because of its work and training. This study's data shows that the guide dogs were compared to children only in the puppy period, during the training and when completing it. While the guide dogs were working, I did not find any reference to them as children nor when they were retired. One of the care families (CF4) explained their idea of how the puppies become the guide dogs while comparing them to children:

CF4: "Q: *What do you think about these guide dog puppies, are they family members or something else?* CF4: *They are my children. I say to people that they are my children as many people wonder how can they part with them. I tell them that they are my children and I raise them to my best ability and I hope that they go to the boarding school. Q: You mean training?* CF4: *Yes, and there they will receive a profession and move away from my home into their own home and get work, very important work. Maybe I hear from them or I do not. It is almost the same with one's own children, you might not hear from them and they might move across the world and seeing them might be challenging. This is how I think about this.*"<sup>48</sup>

This speaker affirmed that when the puppy stays with the care family its life is similar to human children's pre-school phase. After pre-school there might be exams to get into certain school, just as adolescent dogs that are tested to determine if they are suitable for training to become guide dogs. When these dogs pass and, go to the training, it is similar to attending a boarding school as dogs stay at the school's kennels and go to the care family's place during weekends or holidays. After this boarding school there is another evaluation to determine if these dogs are suitable to start work. Those that pass, will move to a new home, with the vision impaired person, and start working. Some guide dog users keep in touch with the care family while others do not. Other comparisons for dogs being children or adolescents were made by the trainers. They were comparing training time at the Guide Dog School as same for human adolescents being in a vocational school and then graduating into a profession. Even when human

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<sup>48</sup> CF4: "K: Miten sinä näet nämä opaskoira pennut, onko ne perheenjäseniä vai mitä? CF4: Ne on mun lapsia. Sillä mä puhun monesti ihmisillekin, kun monet on silleen, että kauheeta, en mä voisi luopua. Mä olen monesti sanonut, että mä ajattelen ne on mun lapsia, mä kasvatan ne parhaan kykyni mukaan ja mä toivon, että ne pääsee sitten tonne sisäoppilaitokseen. K: Eli koulutuksen? CF4: Joo, että jossa he saavat ammatin ja sitten he muuttaa pois kotoa, omaan kotiin ja duuniin, tärkeeseen duuniin. Ja sitten niin kuin ehkä kuulen, ehkä en. Vähän niin kuin omienkin lasten kohdalle, ei se ole niin sanottua, että kuulee ja omatkin lapset saattaa muuttaa vaikka toiselle puolelle maailmaa, niin että näkeminenkin voi olla haasteellista. Silleen mä sen ajattelen."

adolescents are in the vocational school, they do not always know if this is what they want to do when they grow up. It is similar with future guide dogs, as not always do all the dogs that go into the guide dog training, pass as guides. Some of those dogs lose the interest to train and then a different vocation is looked for (see if they are suitable to become another type of working dog) or then they become pets.

In my interviews I did ask if guide dog could be replaced by another human and I received mixed answers, partly yes but it would be expensive, or no as the dog is not replaceable. My next thought process is not something that I asked in the interviews, instead it is something that I have thought afterwards as a curiosity. If humans cannot replace the guide dogs then could a robot achieve this? When thinking of guide dogs in general, it is a living being with soft fur and warm body. A dog has needs thus it should go outside for recommended three times a day. As it is a living being and dog, what I have discovered is that many people approach people with guide dogs, talking about the dog and conversation might evolve into something beyond the dog. Would this happen with the robot? Would it become something similar as the white stick? Robots might be a curiosity when they are new and people might approach due to this, but later on when robots are more standard? A guide dog brings new people to the vision impaired person's life, dog trainers, possible care families, possible activities with guide dog (organised by Finnish Federation of the Visually Impaired or some other organisations), getting to know other guide dog users and the possible contact with the family or person who will take care of the retired dog. These contacts most probably would be missing with a robot, only contact would be the customer service help for questions/problems relating to the guide robot. In some areas the robots would be more beneficial, for example when looking from the technological aspect. A robot could calculate the easiest routes with the least obstacles, it could check public transport information, and genuinely make the blind person's life less restrictive and easier. The robot probably would not be able to replace the guide dog's unique personality and the companionship that another living being can offer. Being with a guide dog offers a feeling of an independence and the ability to care for some other being, with the robot this would be lost. In the relationship of the human and the guide dog there is mutual trust, whereas in the relationship of human and robot there would exist only unidirectional relationship.

As shown throughout of this chapter, the guide dogs cannot be treated as being cold objects or ready robots, these are living and feeling beings with individual names that together with their trainers and users share this world and become with. If one wants to see the world as only having tools and only having companion animals, a guide dog then dwells in this world and the boundary of these two, tool and companion animal, is permeable and is easily crossed by the guide dog (I am borrowing here Ingold's line of thought of dwelling and boundary that is permeable from 2000: 76). In GDU2 terms the guide dogs need to be seen as they are, living aid tools that help with the moment. Treating them otherwise would devalue its meaning and the time that many different people have into it. It would also devalue the dog's own wants and needs to become a guide for humans, as shown earlier in this chapter. In the next chapter I will recap the guide dog's

last phase of the cycle, the retirement and then the afterlife. As I will argue in the next chapter that guide dogs continue to live on, genetically and by forming interspecies networks.

## 5. Dog's retirement

In my first interview with a guide user, GDU1, I was surprised how fondly GDU1 was discussing about user's former guide dogs. GDU1 current guide dog was the fifth guide dog in use. In a way the discussion was almost emotionless but I could sense pride in the speech. Of course, I knew that often humans and dogs form a bond but I was also wondering how the guide dog user and the guide dog would form this bond and keep it that it will withhold time. My reasoning behind this was that the guide dog did not belong to the guide dog users as the guide dog users do not own the guide dogs. The guide dogs do not come as puppies to the user instead the guide dogs are already adults and are quite ready for work. The guide dogs do not either spend their retirement with the guide dog user, instead they are at a different place, with a different family. The guide dog's life cycle thus neatly closes. The guide dogs spend their working life with their user and this working life might be even ten years long. I felt I was overthinking in trying to analyse the bond between the human and the dog, and this showed that there was still a lot to learn, I was a novice in the field, not everything can be analysed or reasoned.

This chapter will be the final piece of this study of the guide dogs. In this part I will write about the guide dogs' final phase and the discuss how the guide dogs connects people and how the connections live on after the dog. I consider that these connections are made with the terms of kinship and that care families' commitment to the dog cannot be explained through the ideas of charity or gift giving, mutual reciprocity and idea of the guide dog being a sort of inalienable possession might help to clarify the formed relationships and bonds.

### 5.1 Bonds that are created

The retirement age for a guide dog is around 12 years old, this means that the guide dogs can have a ten-year working career before their retirement. Of course, if there are any medical or physical issues before that, a guide dog can retire earlier. Most often a new family is looked for the retired dog, as the dog's old user most often takes a new guide dog. It is very difficult for the user to learn with the new dog and also have the retired dog present at the same time. GDU2 told me that it is not possible for to GDU2 keep the dog for the retirement, as GDU2 was living alone, there would have to be another adult who can take care of the dog. I have read that some vision impaired can still keep the retired dog as they have another family member, who can buy the dog from the Guide Dog School. I have heard that most often user's relatives or close friends might take the retired dog so it will stay, in most cases, close by. Occasionally the original care family

of the retired dog will take it as they have an option for this when taking the puppy. If no one from the user's friendship circle or from kin take the dog, nor the dog's care family, then the dog is sold to outside of the Guide Dog School to someone who wants it. I heard that these are rare cases as usually there is someone who knows the dog to be willing to take it.

Government's working dogs' retirement age is around ten years and for guide dogs this when the dog is 12 years old but of course it can be earlier if needed. With every dog an estimate is made by dog's the trainer and other people such as veterinarians, in the guide dog's case the guide dog user will usually start to notice if the guide dog starts to slow down in the walking pace or is not anymore very willing to work. This usually can be seen that the dog wants to sleep even more, is not very eager to come when the guide dog's harness is shown. I was told that the goal is that the working dog still has plenty of time left to spend for the retirement. The purpose is not work the dog so that it is completely worn out once it retires. The guide dogs have physical checks and if it seems that dog is not anymore to fit to do its work it will retire earlier.

One of the guide dog users, GDU2, expressed wishes for the dog's retirement:

GDU2: *"I would keep it if I could.[. . .]Yes, there are plenty of takers for it. If I have to give this dog (name removed) to a stranger then I would like that it is in the countryside. So that it could relax there, not for it to be in this city environment."*<sup>49</sup>

Guide dog will lose its working outfit, the guide dog harness and thus becomes a pet as it is no longer considered as an aid tool. The retired guide dog will become a family member for the new or old (in the case of a former care family takes it) family, but the first time in its life it is considered as a pet. Still, I would think that the previous profession makes these former guide dogs something more than just as pets. As shown in the previous chapter, these guide dogs do grow up, they are not left in the liminal state of limbo (of never growing and always to be considered as a child).

I still follow actively the Guide Dog School's public Facebook page (even though it has been more than three years from my fieldwork) and I saw pictures of a dog that had retired. With the pictures of the dog (one picture attached here, figure 7.) there was a text describing that this dog has retired when it was 10 years old and currently the dog is 15 years old and is still happy. What caught my attention with these pictures was that the dog was retired to the same family where it was raised, the same care family. There has been maybe at least 7 years gap that the care family has taken care of the dog. Of course, the Facebook text does not tell if the care family has taken care of the guide dog while the guide dog user has been on holidays thus the gap of

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<sup>49</sup> GDU2: "Muuten se jäisi minulle, kyllä mä sen pitäisin jos voisin. [- -]Kyllä niitä ottajia on, niitä kyllä riittää. Ehkä mä näkisin, että jos mä joudun tästä (nimi poistettu) luopuun vieraalle, niin että se pääsisi ainakin maaseudulle. Että sillä olisi lungisti siellä, että ei enää tällaista kaupunki ympäristöä."



taking care of the dog might be shorter. It is interesting to see that one truly makes a commitment for the dog, similarly as CF5 mentioned in the chapter 3.



Figure 7. Retired guide dog, 15 years old.

In one of my interviews with one of the care family one mentioned that she was in a dog park where there was a retired working dog. The new owner of this working dog was commenting that this dog was not a dog that this new owner expected. This retired dog did not know how to be with other dogs as probably during its working life it was kept separate from other dogs. This retired dog did not also know how to play fetch with the ball and the new owner was disappointed with this as this dog did not perform as it was expected for a normal dog, or at least what the new owner thought as normal behaviour for dogs. One other thing that the dog did that the new owner found as nuisance was that the dog kept picking up sticks that were on the walking path and possibly the old user, while the dog was still working, might have found very useful (dog made sure that the user would not trip on any sticks) where as the old user found this strange and did not appreciate the retired dog's work effort. I asked while being in the Guide Dog School that do they know if any of the retired guide dogs return from a family, of not being suitable. They had not heard any of this type of situations. GDU1 mentioned that only one of the retired guide dogs changed families, it did not settle in. Thus, there was a brief moment when GDU1 had a new working guide dog and the retired dog. According to GDU1, the retired dog happily stayed at home, when GDU1 left for work with the new guide dog. One of the co-workers of GDU1 finally took the retired dog as it was difficult with two dogs. The retired dog accustomed to the new place very well and according to GDU1 was happy there. GDU1 told me that the Labrador Retrievers adjust smoothly to new people and places as long as they receive good food and scratches behind the ear as ever so often. GDU1 misses the former four guide dogs, as their working relationship was long, in each case around ten years, but as a new rascal<sup>50</sup> of a guide dog comes along, one cannot reminisce too long.

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<sup>50</sup> GDU1 used a Finnish term "hunsvotti" meaning a rascal, hooligan in a way, describing that the new young guide dog had a lot more energy than the retired guide dog.

Kinship ideas in anthropology might elaborate more of the bond that the care families and the guide dog users share with the guide dog, and answer to my pondering in the beginning of this chapter. According to Sahlins, kinship basically means that of 'mutuality of being' (2011a: 2). Sahlins describes it as sharing and experiencing the life together, shaping each other's lives, procreation but also the relationships that form without biology (ibid) through performance (ibid: 14) are included. This idea of performance includes that of sharing food, working and living together thus an active being and involvement in others' lives is needed. Sahlins makes a statement that "all means of constituting kinship are in essence the same." (ibid) meaning that all the different ways of a 'mutuality of being' are kinship. "We don't perform kin recognition in the way that animals do because we have the concept of kinship" (Wells, cited in Strathern 1992: 14). In Strathern's book 'Reproducing the future' in the first chapter it is described that animals can recognise and adjust their behaviour depending on the relatedness of the other animal. Whereas humans, mothers, can recognise their babies cry, we also recognise other humans as our family without being related by blood (ibid). On basis of kin is parents, siblings, children, spouses, forming from having sex, transmitting genes and giving birth (ibid: 5). Now these traditional ideas are changing as new reproductive technologies have advanced and children can be created partly without own biology, having help from other's biology. Strathern's book was written in 1992 when the technologies started to become more available but now the ideas of kinship probably have moved forward, as now adoption and egg donation is more common in Western side of the world. In Strathern's book it is mentioned that in The Human Fertilisation and Embryology Act mentions that the child-to-be's welfare needs to be ensured and one of the criteria is the need for father (ibid: 17). One of the examples why I mentioned that ideas of family and perhaps kinship has moved on, is that for example in Finland now single mothers-to-be and female couples can receive fertility treatment with donated egg and donation sperm in public healthcare (Aalto: 2019a, 2019b; HUS). One step further is that there might be more dog puppies than babies born in the future Finnish population (Pölkki 2019). This might again shift our ideas from the traditional human to human kinship to towards more of interspecies kinship ideas.

The bond between the care families and the guide dog user might be best described with Sahlins idea of 'mutuality of being'. As in an essence the guide dogs share many of the qualities that are considered to be in the performance of kinship; living in the same house, working together with humans, sharing a mutual trust, sharing food and are intrinsic to the life of the guide dog user. It does not matter that these dogs are not owned, this actually might make the relationship more to be in mutual terms.

## 5.2 Connections that live on

One of the guide dog users, GDU1, told me that GDU1 was with all of the deceased former guide dogs, during at the end, in the vet's office, with the care family and said goodbye to

the former family members. This meant that there was gap of several years, when those dogs had lived and worked with GDU1. GDU1 mentioned that GDU1 was often remembering the old guide dogs but that was life, when one of the old guide dog's retired, a new guide dog came along. This did not mean that the old guide dogs mattered any less. Similarly, in my other minor ethnographic example of prison dogs, I learned later, through an article (Valkila 2018: 39), that the older drug and gun dog had died while still actively working. The community had remembered the dog by pulling the Finnish flag to the middle in the flag pole, as they do when humans die. These actions indicate that these working dogs are not merely guide dogs, aid tools, work tools nor objects. There is something deeper in these relationships of the human and the dog. In the previous sub-chapter, I was using kinship terms, mainly Sahlins' idea, to explain this connection. In this sub-chapter I will see if there are any ways that reciprocity, ideas of exchange and gift theory might help to explain this connection further. I will also briefly describe how the guide dogs live on genetically even after being deceased.

The Guide Dog School's sperm bank enables the guide dogs' genetic material to live on in younger generators of dogs even though the donator is not alive anymore. Some of the oldest sperm samples originate from the 1980-1990's, although the head of the kennel, when interviewed, did not know if the older samples were still actively used. Most often the sperm is collected when the dog is young, then it is castrated and can start the training process to become a guide dog (castration was explained that the male dogs would become calmer and receptive for the training). The Guide Dog School also sells sperm samples and exchanges and buys it from other countries' guide dog organisations or from others that breed suitable dogs. The aim is to have around 60 puppies per year as around 50 % of these on average are trained. As the Guide Dog School is not very large organisation, they cannot maintain more puppies than are necessary but there are also risks that some of the puppy litters fail, e.g. for health reasons. The goal is to have around 25-30 trained guide dogs per year. For this the Guide Dog School receives funding, but the purpose is not to make profit thus many of the extra operations require volunteers.

Many of the care families mentioned that their one of the motivations to take a guide dog puppy was that they wanted to do their part to help as they considered this to be vital for the society. Other reasons were to try out if a dog would suit their family or the care family had a keen interest in the dog training. The care families give a lot of resources while raising these puppies, resources that would be spent over the period of one and half years. The Guide Dog School provides a collar and a leash and also takes care of the vet costs and provides training lessons. The care families then cover the food, travel and possible accessories such as bed, clothing, toys etc. The care families spend mostly their own time as training the guide dog puppy is a huge commitment and effort. Still, as the guide dog puppy belonged to the Guide Dog School, the commitment was not seen in the same way as it would be to have an own pet. The Guide Dog School was in charge off all the serious decision and the ultimate care and wellbeing of the dog. This took some of the pressure off from the care families. Raising guide dog gives also the care family some social status and appreciation as it is very important and dignified charity work.

Audience for this charity work, raising a guide dog puppy, is quite small, maybe some other people in the care family's life are told about this, the Guide Dog School and trainers know about it, vision impaired people know about it but it is not known for the wide public or national level. Biggest reward, though, might be the dog itself or the puppy for the care families and their work. Dogs do give unconditional love to people that take care of the dog. Dogs are always happy to see the human and it is generally known that petting a dog alleviates stress same as walking the dog three times a day or more, has health benefits as this is an outdoors activity and maintains or helps with physical fitness.

Thus there can be mutual reciprocity in the relationship of a care family and a guide dog puppy, as there is mutual gain for all participants; the guide dog puppy gains care and love, the care family receives experience and feeling of importance, the Guide Dog School receives help to raise these guide dog puppies and lastly the vision impaired person receives a well-trained and motivated guide dog. Reciprocity has long history in the Western history, as it created social relations that in turn created certain social hierarchies and power relationships starting from the Middle Ages (Weiner 1992: 29) whereas later on the reciprocity might give a feeling of completeness in the world of material consumption and create strong bonds between people (ibid: 31). In this case as expressed above, the old Middle Age ideas of power relationships do not apply here, as the care families do not receive this kind of status but they might receive the feeling of being complete and doing something for others.

Johnson's article uses Marcel Mauss' famous 'The Gift' book on the basis of his writing, where a gift is not merely a gift, it is something reciprocal, it is something that binds and brings together people from different social groups (1996: 308). According to Johnson a gift is never pure, it is always motivated consciously or unconsciously (ibid). Example in the article is Polynesian gifts where the gift retains part of the giver's soul and thus there is something remaining in the gift even though it has now new owner (ibid: 310). I was thinking about the guide dogs when I read this. For the guide dogs, most often some traces of the previous care family or caretaker can be found from the dog's behaviour as the dog learns some behaviour traits or habits based on their previous caretaker's life. Somethings are not purposefully taught to the dog but the dog is living being that learns all the time, especially when it has been a puppy in the care family. One example that I heard in my interview was that one of the guide dogs was able to find liquor store from anywhere (in Finland Alko liquor store has monopoly over the alcohol that contains more than 5,5% of alcohol, source: Alko). This was not something that the current guide dog user had taught, it was something that the dog knew already. It was little bit unclear for the guide dog user who was the one that had taught this to the dog or was it something that the dog learned from the behaviour of the previous care family. There was no contact to the care family thus the guide dog user was unable to ask this. There are traces of the dog's care families, trainers and other people in the dog's life before the vision impaired person. But is this trace a part of the giver's soul, or Hau as Mauss writes (in Johnson 1996), because guide dog is not an item, it is living and breathing animal, dog. Mary Douglas also states that gifts are not free as they engage

people in the cycle of gifts and permanent commitments (in Hanson 2015: 507). Guide dog puppies do not cause permanent commitment, more permanent, dog's lifelong commitment is based on the willingness of the care family. Care families can commit only to the puppy period when they are actively raising the puppy. Later on, they can take care of the dog during guide dog users' holidays. Some care families are willing to take the dog once it retires from its guide work, becoming a normal dog and pet for the first time in its life.

Could then Annette Weiner's idea of inalienable possessions explain the relationship of the care family and what is a guide dog puppy, if the idea of a gift is not suitable. Her idea of inalienable possessions is that the basis of the gift exchange has a deeper meaning than just exchange of goods, there is the idea of 'keeping-while-giving' (1992: 2), these possessions are usually something that are not easily given to, might be inseparable in some ways from the owner, and usually are passed on in a kin or a certain group (ibid: 6). The inalienable possessions survive time as they create relationships and bonds that might create certain power relationships (ibid: 151) and they are not always pure objects, as in her example of sibling relationships, when siblings marry, as they still maintain and enforce the sibling relationship and gain future members of the kin that relations are maintained through mutual reciprocity (ibid: 16-17, 151). Or as Sahlins has also written about it that when persons reciprocally exchange and receive things that are inalienable associated with the person, these exchanges might create a fellowship' between these people (Sahlins 2011b: 237). In this sense care families keep the part of the guide dog, meaning memories, experiences, connections, as they have shared the puppy period. Some of the care families do actively maintain the connection to the dog, even though, the dog will move to, at later date, to the vision impaired person's home. Through the reciprocity, new bonds might be formed with the care family and the guide dog user, as it happened in the CF4 example. In this way the guide dogs can be seen as a sort of inalienable possessions but the dog itself is also an active agent in these relationships.

A guide dog is something special, as it is not an object, and it being as a gift cannot explain it, as the care families and guide dog users do not own the dog, dog belongs to the Guide Dog School. Mutual reciprocity relationships with parties that are involved with the guide dog, such as care families, Guide Dog Schools, guide dog user and the guide dog itself explain this partly, as every participant receives something from these relationships. Inalienable possessions might partly explain the bond that the guide dog shares with different people as well, as inalienable possessions survive time and the different life phases of the guide dog.

### 5.3 Web of social connections

'Becoming with' is a term that Donna Haraway uses (2008) and it is very suitable in describing what is guide dog and its vision impaired person. Haraway writes that when she becomes with dogs, she is drawn into multispecies knots and those knots continue to build and

retie with reciprocal actions of this multispecies interactions (ibid: 35). Similarly, these knots spread from the guide dogs through to their relations to other humans, and connecting further beyond the dog, becoming a web like structure where knots and thread intersect creating new pathways. Image of this web in my head is something similar to a dreamcatcher where the weaving starts or ends in the middle, where in this case, the guide dog would be in the middle. There are relationships that form after and through the guide with functions and doings relating to the guide dog subject.

*GDU2: "Q: Has the dog changed your life in any other way, besides giving you an ability to move? GDU2: It has if one thinks about the social surroundings, it has changed after having a dog. There are acquaintances that relate to this or are some part involved with this.[. . .]It is a certain group that is involved with the Guide Dog School."*<sup>51</sup>

When I visited one of the guide dog user's home, after I was leaving, I noticed four pictures on the wall of the hallway. The pictures were of the former guide dogs. With this concrete vision, I realised that it is not only the guide dog that comes to person's life, it is also other people, care families when the dog was a puppy, trainers that help with the dog in the beginning and during its working life, other members of the guide dog school, vets, other guide dog users or other people with the guide dog subject area, people that are met outside with the help of the dog and finally the people that will take the dog when it retires. Some relationships are shallower, including only greeting when meeting, some relationships focus only the guide dog i.e. vet or trainer and some will evolve into friendship. Most of the trainers told me that even though it is important to train the dogs the most important is the relationships between people. Trainers often have to think how they will train different types of people, with different backgrounds and life experiences, to be with the dogs, including both the puppy and the working phase. The dogs were seen easy compared to the relationships with people.

One of the care family, CF4, described that they keep contact to the guide dog user that CF4 trained as a puppy. The guide dog user and the guide dog has spent two last Christmas Eve's with CF4 and they visit and call each other occasionally. CF4 is also good friends with three different guide dog users and knows many more.

*CF4: "Q: Did you guess that when you started as a care family that you will have this many social contacts to these people who use guide dogs and so many social*

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<sup>51</sup> GDU2: "K: Onko se koira jotenkin muuten muuttanut elämää kuin liikkumisen kannalta? GDU2: Onhan se tietty kun miettii jotain sosiaalista ympäristöä, onhan se muuttunut sen myötä, että on tuttuja, ketkä liittyy tai on mukana jollain tapaa tässä [- -]Sehän on oma porukka, joka pyörii tossa opaskoirakoulussa."

*relationships are born? CF4: No, no I did not expect anything of this and I did not guess that I would be hooked on this.*"<sup>52</sup>

CF4 continued to explain why she was attracted to raising the guide dog puppies. One of the reasons was that CF4 was able to see the puppy period, it is the loveliest and also the toughest phase (also CF3 mentioned this exactly the same). Second was that these dogs were so receptive and it felt that it was very easy to teach these and now that CF4 has learned to know many different guide dog users, it was very clear to CF4 that it is very important work as through this work vision impaired will also receive guide dogs. CF4 mentioned, that it was very difficult to depart from one of the guide dog puppies but when the guide dog user called after three weeks of receiving the guide dog, all the misery, that was caused from letting the dog go, disappeared as according to CF4 all the hardship was worth it. One of the rewarding things was that when they met with the guide dog user, guide dog (that CF4 raised) and CF4's other dogs in training, the guide dog showed with its actions that the guide dog user was its number one person. As the guide dog first guided the guide dog user to a bench, then when free (in a dog park) went to greet other the dogs and then lastly the old care family, CF4. And during that time that they all spent there, the guide dog went occasionally to touch its guide dog user's hand, indicating that it was still there and if the user needed it for anything. CF4 mentioned that it is optional to keep contact with the guide dog user as sometimes personal chemistries do not match, then there is no one forcing to keep contact. As in many of the Guide Dog yearly publications there are many articles where vision impaired people tell that the same trainers have helped them with their new dogs. There connections to care families that have raised their guide dog, there are connections to families that take the retired dog, there are connections to other vision impaired people who also have guide dogs in their use, get to know other guide dog users in the two week training where vision impaired and their new guide dogs are learning to know each other, and also then the volunteers who help visions impaired people and their guide dog with new areas and routes for example. The guide dogs work almost as kinship glue, they create long-lasting relationships to and with people who are not related by blood or marriage, instead they are all related by the guide dog agenda and the performance and mutuality of being using Sahlins terms.

One of the trainer's mentioned to me while interviewing him that one reason for a Labrador Retriever to be one of the most popular guide dog breeds was that they accept almost anyone to take care of them. One of the jokes in puppy training and one of the guide dog users was that if one has food then the Labrador Retriever is one's new best friend and one can lead them away from their trainer/user. Of course, these were jokes but were also telling the story behind the Labrador Retrievers temperament. When guide dog breeds are selected one of the

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<sup>52</sup> CF4: "K: Osasitko sä arvata kun lähdit hoitoperheeksi, että tulee näin paljon kontakteja näihin, jotka käyttää näitä opaskoiria ja syntyy tavallaan tällaisia sosiaalisia suhteita? CF4: En, en odottanut mitään sellaista ja en arvannut miten jää koukuun tähän hommaan."

criteria is that the guide dogs cannot get too attached to their owners as then it would be difficult to raise, train and use them for work.

Many of the care families described to me how different, unknown people approached them while being outside with the guide dog puppy. Most often people asked questions while the guide dog puppy was wearing the white training vest. The people often asked about why was the puppy wearing a vest, or if they knew about the guide dog puppies beforehand, then the questions were more related to the training and raising the guide dog puppies. For many it was already quite well known that while training these puppies could not be disturbed, same as it is for the working guide dogs. Trainers described that sometimes people approach as well asking about more specifically about the training the guide dog work. Both guide dog users, and specifically GDU2, had experienced larger sociality that came with the guide dogs, as people would approach or talk to more easily with the guide dog than while using the white stick. Both GDU1 and GDU2 emphasised the courage to go with the guide dogs anywhere they wanted where as the white stick was limiting factor. Sanders' article mentions one negative side effect of having a guide dog, this is when people approach through the guide dogs. Meaning that most often the guide dog's name was remembered but the person, who was using the guide dog, was forgotten. Sanders' article also mentions that the guide dog users often felt that they had to present the whole guide dog user community and this meant that they had to adjust their behaviour accordingly. (2000: 135-136.) In my one interview with the guide dog user the negative side effects did not come out nor the idea of representing a group of persons. GDU2 mentioned though that some people had shouted to GDU2, that the dog was being abused as it was forced to work. In case of the care families, the mentioned presentation of community, came out that some of the care families felt that they were representing the organisation, the Guide Dog School, and in a way, they felt that some cases they represented the also visually impaired persons as they were raising the guide dogs to be.

A guide dog is a social glue that connects and creates new relationships between people with them wanting this or not. These relationships are created with an active engagement, being with the dogs and then with people relating to the guide dog topic, and through performance of kinship, with acts of mutuality of being (Sahlins 2011a, 2011b) and with the idea of inalienable possessions (Weiner 1992) as each person keep something from the relationship with the dog, this relationship does not end when the dog moves to a different home.

## 6. Conclusion

I started out this study with questions of work, value of that work and how is the dog, in this case, the guide dog, perceived. I continued to answer these questions with ideas of how animals are treated in the human society; starting from wild animals to domestication and then



becoming almost human through transformation of becoming a pet. I also viewed the relationships between the humans and the animals with the concepts of domination and trust and the social contract. The most crucial finding were the ideas of active engagement, being with and becoming with. I started to describe my fieldwork material: observations and interviews, using my material in describing the different lifecycles of the guide dog. In the first phase, there was the puppy period and raising and training puppies. The next phase was the more intensive training of the guide dogs to be, with the trainers and after finishing this, the working life with the vision impaired person. The final phase included retirement and death.

My material clearly shows that the guide dogs do work, but how the work is understood differed. Some view it more with the perspective of doing certain functions or tasks (e.g. the function of guiding and providing freedom to move), whereas others attached it to the title or status of the human and what the dog was doing according to this (a bomb dog with a police officer), but in these both cases, the guide dogs were seen important and doing work. The main benefit and purpose of the guide dog's work is to give the ability for moving independently. There is no need for other humans, and the movement with the guide dog provided freedom, more freedom than with the white stick. The white stick is seen as limiting and isolating. Whereas, when moving with a guide dog, the social world became larger as strangers might approach and start a conversation. With having a guide dog, this means that other people will become a part of one's life either with minor or major impact. This is because raising guide dogs is not result of one person's labour, it requires multiple people and their efforts and time, and this effort and contact with the dog does not end when the dog transfers to a different phase of the lifecycle. These contacts and relationships stay with the dog throughout its life (it can be seen as different behaviours that the dog has adopted from these different people), with people keeping also parts of the dog with themselves, sort of inalienable possessions (from Weiner 1992), especially in the case of the care families and the guide dog users. A deep bond and a relationship with the guide dog can be also explained with active performance of kinship, with mutuality of being (from Sahlins 2011). For the guide dog to function as a proper guide and part of the family, a guide dog needs to be raised inside with a family and to be a part of it. It needs to be a part of people's lives, raised with attention love and discipline. One cannot raise a dog in a kennel or a cage, distant from people, and then expect for it to function inside a home and work with people. One of the guide dog users told me that the user's first guide dog was raised in a kennel and this showed from the dog, it was not very human friendly and it was not accustomed to live inside a house or a flat. Guide dogs need constant being with, as it is the purpose of the dog, to be with humans and help them in turn with its work.

What is a guide dog? Throughout this thesis it is visible that a guide dog is of many things; an animal, a dog, an aid tool, a guide, a family member, a pet, just to mention few. A guide dog is all of those depending on who one asks or where one reads about it. In the eyes of law and its payer, the hospital districts and insurance companies, a guide dog is an aid tool. For the care families it is a family member, the trainers consider them as a dog co-worker, for the guide dog

users guide dogs are quintessential for the independent movement, an aid tool in this sense, and are seen as family members and finally when retired the guide dogs are still family members but can be seen as pets.

I will return here to Ingold's thought of 'trust' and 'domination' (2000) that I introduced in chapter 2.2. I consider that the guide dog and its user pertain both domains of trust and domination. There is the idea of domination as the guide dog has gone through a long process of domestication (domestication of a dog) and then from there an even further selection within the dog breeds to select the optimal guide dogs and genes. Humans dominate over guide dogs, controlling the breeding, growth and the ending of the dog's life. Humans dictate which of certain puppies and later certain adolescent dogs go into further training, depending on the physical and mental and performative properties of the dog. In addition humans' control who the dog will work for and create relationships with and when it is time to stop working and, in the end, when it is time to stop living. Still, without the idea of trust, this equation does not work. Humans need to trust the guide dog's performance in guiding. A dog in return trusts humans that it is treated properly and rewards this mutual trust by performing work, guiding visually impaired people. A guide to be also clearly shows if it wants to continue the training to guide, humans cannot force it to become a guide dog. If this relationship between the humans and the guide dogs belonged only to the domain of domination, the relationship would not be that of what it is based on my ethnographic material, as in the domain of domination, the guide dog would be seen merely as an object but clearly it is much more. The trust factor from Ingold is one way of explaining this relationship. Another way of explaining this is Haraway's idea of 'becoming with' as the guide dog becomes with the visually impaired person and vice versa, and they become intertwined. As mentioned before, a guide dog user cannot guide the dog, the dog needs to do the guiding part thus the guide dog user needs to surrender a part of the control to the dog, becoming with the guide dog, in order for this to work. For a guide dog to be seen as an object is not necessarily a negative perspective, it allows the dog to participate in every aspect of life as serving a function of being an aid tool, and being this the law allows the dog to go where ever the vision impaired wants to go. This is something more and different than other animals serving the purpose of a pet, for example, can attain.

*"Yes, a guide dog is a sort of wholesome system. It cannot be only seen as an aid tool but neither seen only as a companion dog."<sup>53</sup>*

The guide dogs cannot be categorised as either aid tools or family members, they belong to both of these categories. The guide dogs spend time with vision impaired persons more than any other beings, these dogs are with them at home, at work, outside from home while shopping or just going for a walk. The guide dog is more than just a cold tool, it has soft fur, it is warm and gives comfort in its own way. The guide dog gives freedom to go anywhere, it also gives

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<sup>53</sup> "Kyllä opaskoira on sellainen kokonaisvaltainen systeemi. Ei voisi vaan pelkästään apuvälineenä olla mutta ei saa myöskään olla pelkästään seurakoira." Vesa Väkeväinen, head of Kennel, the Guide Dog School

possibilities to contact the outside world and people there. The guide dog makes the guide dog user to be more approachable and builds social relationships to other humans. Through ways of becoming with and being with, a guide dog is trained and vice versa a guide dog shapes humans. A guide dog and a human relationship entail the active engagement of both parties, ideas of kinship in the ways of mutuality of being, being and becoming with.

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## Figures

During my fieldwork I asked permission if I could use photos from the Guide Dog School's public Facebook page and also I asked permission from Hannele Rontu (who has taken most of Guide Dog School's pictures).

Figure 1. Photo from the Guide Dog School's (Opaskoirakoulu) public Facebook page, picture published 27.2.2018.

Figure 2. Photo taken by myself, from puppy training class in Helsinki-Vantaa airport 12.4.2017

Figure 3. Photo from the Guide Dog School's (Opaskoirakoulu) public Facebook page, picture published 8.12.2019.

Figure 4. Photo from the Guide Dog School's (Opaskoirakoulu) public Facebook page, picture published 10.4.2017.

Figure 5. Photo from the Guide Dog School's (Opaskoirakoulu) public Facebook page, picture published 10.4.2017.

Figure 6. Photo from the Guide Dog School's (Opaskoirakoulu) public Facebook page, picture from the left published 23.10.2015, right picture published 7.6.2016

Figure 7. Photo from the Guide Dog School's (Opaskoirakoulu) public Facebook page, picture published 10.9.2019.

## Attachment

### Fieldwork material 2017

- Five interviews with different guide dog puppy families, second follow-up interview with same family and guide dog puppy (puppy was actually selected for breeding and not become as a guide)
- Two senior guide dog trainers interviewed from the Guide Dog School Janne Ruokonen and Pekka Korri
- One former trainer and current head of Kennels interviewed, Vesa Väkeväinen
- One interview with Guide Dog School's puppy trainer, in charge of puppy training sessions, Elina Suoranta
- One interview with administrator from the Guide Dog School and also former care family, Hannele Ruokonen
- Two interviews with guide dog users, two different persons (vision impaired persons)
- Observation of a guide dog's work in a busy weekday afternoon, a walk from Rautatieasema metro station to Kamppi, walking underground paths
- One interview with a dog trainer that works in prisons with two dogs, one of the dogs is the official drug and gun dog and the other dog is in training, 1½ years old, an observation of a drug search practice with the dogs
- Participant observation in the Guide Dog School's puppy training sessions (around 1 hour per session), around two months of observation, training sessions occurred twice or three times a week
- Participant observation in the Guide Dog School, a puppy photo shoot session that lasted around 3-4 hours
- Participant observation: two home visits with the Guide Dog School's puppy trainer
- Puppy dog meeting, two meetings, puppies from same litter observed
- Observing two work days with a guide dog trainer and dogs in training phase, two different days, different trainers and different training dogs. One with senior trainer Hannu Qvist and another with senior trainer Hannele Rontu
- Observing the Guide Dog School's participation to National Guide Dog Day (Kansainvälinen Opaskoirapäivä), Kamppi, Helsinki, 26.4.2017
- Puppy testing session observed, non-disclosure agreement signed not to reveal anything more specific relating to testing and overall non-disclosure agreement not to reveal any personal details regarding care families and guide dog users
- Conversation with a trainee at the Guide Dog School, puppy school
- Participation to Anthropology days in Jyväskylä, 23.5.2017 student panel, introducing my thesis material to other anthropology students and academics